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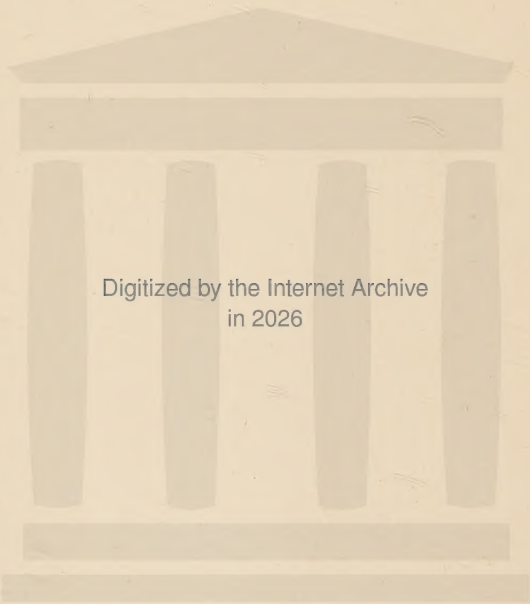

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TEACHER-TRAINING
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STUDIES OF CHRIST IN
THE ACT OF TEACHING
AS A MEANS OF LEARN-
ING HOW TO TEACH

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TO THE GOODLY FELLOWSHIP OF TEACHERS:

A REVERENT TRIBUTE;
AND AN EARNEST APPEAL.

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PREFACE.

This little book aspires to seal a close affiance between would-be teachers and the holy Christ. It is born of boundless admiration for the Lord, and of deep solicitude that all who labor in his name may worthily respect their sacred dignity. It holds the teacher's work in reverent esteem, and conceives the Master's excellence herein to stand easily supreme. It has high confidence in the transforming power of any open vision of the Saviour's face. Hence it simply seeks to designate the various beauties of the Master as they appear among his wise and kindly ways. Its every phrase aspires to be an index finger, pointing with open pride towards the teaching Christ. At every turn it begs to say with joyful eagerness, "See here!" "See there!" "Behold your Lord!"

To the Student.

Keep free. Heed this truly. Above all things **be yourself.** See with your own eyes. Let your thinking be your own. Preserve your independence. Gain some findings that shall be fully, truly yours.

Learn to **look.** Use your eyes. That is, read. Read through and through the Gospel scene. Read to see. See what you read. Put all your intellect into your eyes. Then read with all your eyes. Look.

Then think. Think, first, to make things stand apart. **Distinguish.** Make your seeing definite. Make the different features of the Gospel scene begin to individualize. Get every factor by itself. Look and think until you know, in close detail, just what you see. Persist in this.

Then think again. Compare. **Combine.** Set th separate things together. Find out affinities. Learn how Christ unites. Trace out his reasonings. Push fo unity.

Thus bring out to light **Christ's teaching art.** De tect the secret of his leadership in conference. Trac out the genesis of his opinions. Dig up his motives Locate his aims. Find out his ways and means. Grow familiar with the workings of his mind. Extract th very genius and spirit of his teaching work.

Pursue the work in **order.** Do the first thing first Leave the last thing till the last. Do not begin to prat about Christ's skill and art, while still the very stuf that gives the scene its shape is strange.

In all, **be honest** to the very core. Never trifle Never dawdle. Never sham. You study Christ.

To the Teacher.

Be a model **student,** first. Be a faithful fellow student to the last.

Grasp each lesson as a whole. Its basis is a singl Gospel scene. However full or manifold, it has natural unity. Find its **core.** Then keep that centra feature all the while in view.

See how the lessons subdivide. Trace those lines o natural **cleavage.** In following these inner boundarie get to be expert. Learn to handle the major portion separately. It is curious to see how many times major fraction will contain the whole.

Learn to **allot** these major sections separately to di ferent members of your class. This will lessen th student's task, while leading him still into the lesson heart.

In handling any single lesson, plot out some **plan** Then hold it fast. Do not suffer vagrancy. Only s will you ever reach the end.

In arranging the entire course, keep **elastic.** Adjus your programme to your class. Shape your schedul as you wish. Linger in one lesson longer, if you desir

Omit whole lessons, if you like. Attempt original tasks, if you have a competent class.

Discourage haste. Do not rush to reach the fortieth lesson in the fortieth week. Cherish **thoroughness.** In every scene the Saviour stands entire. Do fine work. Take time.

Insist on **thought.** Note how simple all the questions are. They lie within the range of common, daily life. Not ten inquiries in all the book are beyond the range of the average person above eighteen, if he will look and think. But no man can answer them off-hand. And they refuse to be disdained.

Appreciate the difference in those lessons at the end —the closing eight. They demand peculiar breadth and steadiness of view. They aim at **final synthesis**—a short inclusive statement of the whole. In them the strength and earnestness of your mind must do their best. And it will take your time. But get your powers all together and settle down. Begin. Persist. And do not end until you see how all your visions of your Lord can blend and unify.

LESSON I.

To Refine a Crude Nature.

John 3 : 1-21.

1. Get to understand Nicodemus. How does he come? What does he seek? What does he need? For any teacher, such questions as these are primary matters. We may be sure Christ, in teaching, took no step in the dark. He knew his man. Now what stands clear upon the face of Nicodemus, at the very start? Can you say?

(a) He was a dignitary; think of this. And he carried into the conference his class consciousness; note his plurals. And he chose the night; this seems notable. Do you feel sure what it means? And he must have felt some motive; but see if you can state it. You will find it impossible. He was non-committal. He named no errand. He gave the conversation no aim. He merely opened it. This is a vital point. Think what it suggests about Nicodemus; what it must signify for Christ. Think of the scholar who is *neutral.* But he does show deference. See if you can define this.

Now Jesus sets in. Watch what he does. He accosts him in the singular; he parts him from his class; he looks him in the eye. He makes his assertion gravely strong. He selects for his theme the kingdom. He avers that its vision requires for any one a birth from above.

(b) Now study Nicodemus again. Jesus has set before him a definite theme, one that goes to the top of his hope, to the core of his life. Mark how the man replies. It will go far to show what kind of a man he is. Note first his *omission.* In quoting Jesus' theme he drops out a vital phrase, "from above." Stop right here. That oversight has grave significance. It is an unconscious

discovery of Nicodemus' nature. It shows his grain. Can you define this? Try. Then observe from this how far apart, how widely *unlike,* these two persons are. Do not be limp here. You face essentials. Make some answer, and frame your answer as a teacher. Jesus must take some next step. What should it be? Was his actual move a wise one? If you say yes, say just why. No earnest teacher will drift lazily past this point.

Keep thinking. Where did Nicodemus trip? It was over that solemn hint of his need of re-birth. Think how Jesus meant these words. But such a meaning Nicodemus has no eye to see. Study his mind. It is negligent. It is in perplexity. Its answer more than hints a doubt. It comes close to bald denial. And all because he is not spiritually alert. He is encased in flesh. He really needs to be born from above. See this. How unwittingly he *betrays* the very truth he is so inclined to *deny.* So deep is his need. But so dull is his eye. What shall the Master do? What would you do?

(c) Now study Christ's procedure. Can you analyze vv. 5-8, having Nicodemus' actual state and attitude in mind? In the first place, in the heart of Jesus' words, he roundly reaffirms just what he said before. Mark that. Then he distinguishes two births, bringing the spiritual sharply to the front, and alluding to water as its symbol. Then he calls this spiritual energy a hidden and unsearchable mystery. Now unify this, and give it point, and fix its point on Nicodemus. Is it this? Nicodemus is to have done with grovelling, forego all doubting, and stop his marvelling. He is to face towards heaven, and give Christ's spirit life straight entrance to his very soul.

(d) Now weigh Nicodemus' second retort. He is stuck just where he was. But the case is not the same. He stands in fuller light. State the case. Jesus has pointed most impressively towards the bright, pure, hidden spirit realm. But Nicodemus seems to have no *eye* to look that way. Will you trace out his profile? He is a dull, uncultured soul, having no inner sense of inner need, no craving towards God's pure excellence, no deep humility, no glint of penitence, no relish for the

Messiah's saving mercy, no real solicitude, no true docility. He is spiritually *inert.* Is this too harsh? Then moderate it, only striving honestly to gain precise agreement with what Jesus must have thought.

Now what would you do next? Are you in a state accurately to forecast his policy? If you are, you are a rarity. You are well entitled to counsel others how to teach. The Master first pricks the empty bubble of his sordid pupil's *dignity* (v. 10). Then he jealously corroborates his own *veracity.* See how he does it. Then he opens into *two* stupendous themes: the world's dense shroud of darkness and guilt; and his heavenly commission to save by sacrifice all sinners who believe, taxing most pointedly the stolid unbelief of the class whom Nicodemus represents. And so Nicodemus vanishes.

2. Now observe the Teacher. Follow him from the start.

(**a**) Watch him pick and hold his theme. Would you ever have done like that? Follow him throughout. Nicodemus was pitifully unreceptive, unresponsive, to say the very least. But Jesus held fast to his chosen theme. Suppose you try to get the meaning of this in teaching. And observe the sum and range of his thought—the kingdom, the new birth, the need, the Spirit, the mystery, the heavenly vision, the witness, the world ruin, the world rescue, the faith, the eternal life. What is your opinion of the value to a teacher of such a fertile *fullness* of thought?

(**b**) Feel his moral *earnestness.* Study the Master's main purpose, first with Nicodemus, then with all the world. Mark his tenacity, as Nicodemus confronts his words with doubt. See his jealousy to be believed. Notice how tense his avowals all are, how piercing his insight, how strenuous his idea about the need of a spiritual birth. Tarry here. To all appearances this conference made no headway. But so it only illustrates his whole experience. All evil doers hate the light. His career is to culminate upon the cross. But he holds straight on everywhere, as here. Another man may be a moral nobody. Jesus, never. Think of this. Imagine

his moral resolution easing up and giving way. But how about any other teacher?

(c) See how he levels human *pride*. The "need" of the "birth" from "above"—could any word cut deeper into human vanity, or make fuller havoc of all self-righteousness?

(d) See how this conference embodies an infinite love. He came to save. He teaches to save. He dies to save. And all the world is herein had in view.

(e) See his finished *art*. When Nicodemus began, his words made Christ the theme. When Jesus replied, he made Nicodemus the theme. Can you see how he accomplished this? Then, though dealing with a neutral sort of mind, he has made this talk a conference; and he has made the conference yield up naturally the mightiest positive themes. Do you see how this was done? This is a point you do well to study out. Then that analogy of the wind—can you trace its meaning to its very point; and tell exactly what that point pins fast, and show its fine simplicity? And then that introduction of his own sacrificial love; can you say it is out of place? But can you show just how it gained a place in these remarks?

(f) Now unify the whole in a *profile* of the model Teacher as he sits at work. Are these the outstanding features? He is spiritual. He deals with character. He feels an infinite repugnance for sin. He works towards life. He is merciful. His primal instinct is to point to the open door of the kingdom; to proffer the infinite aid of the Spirit, to offer himself in sacrifice. He is the soul of honor. His every word is verity. To hint at discrediting aught he says lifts his resentment to the very skies. He is imperial. In all this scene, whatever aspect opens, he stands supreme. These are the great outline strokes. Fill them up. Come to know the Master Workman in his work. He is the very light of every teacher's eye.

LESSON II.

Winning an Alien Life.

John 4 : 5-26.

1. Imagine the scene—an arid land, a hot and dusty footman, the blaze of a Syrian sun, the rarity of wells, the disciples away seeking food, the Master's physical need. Realize the Samaritan-Jewish race feud. Gather allusions to it from the Gospels. Define Christ's task here: to overcome unfriendliness towards the Jews, towards himself, towards God, towards righteousness.

2. The process. How the pure, holy, spiritual, universal Christ won his way into a sordid, narrow life.

(a) He calls for a drink. Think of the nature of this appeal. It sprang from bodily thirst. This is an exigent necessity. It touches something common to all men. To refuse is to be inhuman. It means carrying a race feud to an absurdity. Think into this. Here is a very simple, homely request. But there is tucked up within it a perfect art. Feel the force, the stress of the Master's petition—a call out of bodily suffering, for God's gift, from a fellow man. For breaking down race prejudice, or showing the ugliness of race hate, or finding a vantage ground for friendliness, no point of attack could be better chosen. Think of this. You term it commonplace. But see if you can, by any device of your own, surpass its *skill.*

But scan her answer. Weigh it. Describe it closely. It was sportive, scornful, hard, ungodlike; bitterly, inhumanly unfeeling and cold. But she saved her race honor! Here is a place for thought. Do not idle. And do not rush on. Stop right here, and get to work. Define things. What sort of a case does Christ confront? He must take some *next* step. Join in with him in trying to think what that next step should be. Exactly here is a chance for finest teaching art.

(b) Jesus' resort is to a suggestion of God's good will towards her, of his own worth, and of living water. Here are three high themes. Study into their nature. Were they wisely introduced to such a woman in such a mood? These are not queries to be answered off-hand. But they need answering. Can you trace out the order of Christ's inner thought? What was his idea in mentioning "living water"? It links in just where? It leads forth just whither? Its power lies in just what? So handle each one of his three themes. See and think. How many themes are there here (v. 10)? Are there really three, or only two, or after all, but one? Do you think this woman understood this? Do you?

Now dig into her reply (vv. 11-12). Note her cold and dull insensibility. She seems to have no sense for God, or Christ, or her own inner thirst. She stands untouched, untaught. Here, again, get by yourself and think. Make sure you understand her case. Ponder upon her deep unconsciousness of her own deep life realities. But note her knowledge of Scripture.

(c) Now see the Master's device (vv. 13-14). Here is a mighty transit. He sharpens his allusion to "living water." He shows that waters are of two kinds, of two values: the worth and help of the one perishing, men forever thirsting again; the worth and help of the other permanent, men never thirsting any more, but finding in their inner personal being an unfailing spring, a well-head of eternal life. Now study. See how deft the Master is; and how profound; and how insistent. And do not fail, as you prize your soul, and long to be adept like Christ, to clear your mind about "eternal life"—just what it is, just how it springs within. Scan the woman's reply (v. 15). Just where does she stand? Has Jesus made any headway? Note each element: her deference, her plea, her weariness, that word "hither." She is open. But she is still earth-bound. Estimate each. What would you have said to her *next?*

(d) Now fathom v. 16. What is its inmost significance? It is a closely personal touch. What more? It points straight to her hidden sin. But how? With choice and fine propriety. Is this so? Get your eye

exactly on Jesus' *aim*. Then weigh his words. They were polished shafts. He spoke of her "husband." How fit! But how keen! Watch the woman. Just what is at work within her mind? She tells the truth. But she hides the truth (v. 17). What is needed now? No mind but the most refined and keen can ever say. But every teacher ought to know.

(e) Now comes another arrow (vv. 17-18). It seems all point. Watch the Master, as he lays it to the bow and sends it home. Take that weapon in your hand. Weigh it, feel its edge. "Whom thou now hast is not thy husband." Get the value of that word "husband." Was it too direct, too severe? Could it be more severe? Was it winged with scorn, or love? And now look at the woman. She must have felt two sentiments: a deep amazement, and a mantling shame. Now think and state. At just this point what had Jesus gained?

(f) Now study the turn the woman takes (vv. 19-20). She seems to wish to *divert* the Lord. What does this mean? Would you have suffered it? Jesus did. He followed her proffered lead. Look at the woman. The Master's dart has stuck. Her words in the village betray this. And she shows high respect. And she leads to a high theme. But it involves the old feud. Think all this over. What is going on?

(g) Here comes something worth your while (vv. 21-24). No broader, finer, profounder words were ever voiced. And yet they come within the compass of a child. Study them. Study them as a reply. They are absolutely complete. Study their bearing on the feud. That unity of God. What terms could ever be devised more adequate and apt! Mark their bearing on the woman's life and character. See the play of "spirit" on her carnal life and thought. See the play of "truth" upon her inclination towards concealment and deceit. Then study "worship," such as Jesus designs. Can you define its value and power to clarify thought, purify life, unify men, magnify God, set all things right? Survey the whole. Was it quite wisely said?

(h) But now the woman makes another turn. With her, diversion seems to be an art. See *whither* she goes.

She awaits the Christ. He will clear up all. This seems disappointing, she seems to close the conference. But note her outlook. It is towards the Christ. And the Master is alert. "I am he." And this is all. Now make true survey of this closing scene. Where do they stand? Has Jesus wrought his wish? Just how, step by step, has it been done?

3. Teaching hints. (a) There is in every life an inner thirst, an inner weariness, an inner need, an inner hope, an inner sin.

(b) There is a mighty power in friendliness. Deep, warm, strong, wise, patient friendliness is a moral teacher's choicest quality.

(c) The process was incomplete and still at sea, until it opened into the inner sin. Compute the meaning of this woman's sin. How common is it? How corrupting?

(d) The most transcendent theme can touch the most earth-bound life.

(e) Real teaching is absorbing. See if you can find where Jesus ate or drank that noon.

LESSON III.

Defining and Defending His Mission.

Luke 4 : 16-30.

1. Preliminary. (a) The place. Jesus is in his childhood home, where he is well and widely known. He is in the familiar synagogue, where he was always wont to be, where all his townsmen would be found.

(b) Christ's state of mind. Imagine this. Read over what he said, and think. Before he began, he could not have been inert or apathetic. He spoke out of the fullness of his heart. Before he spoke, his heart was full. Think. As Jesus entered, his mind must have been eager and wide-awake, his heart ardent, his purpose girt. Study your Master, as he steps inside and takes his seat. Now open your eye to his inner posture, as he stands up to read. Get attentive just here. He simply stands up in his place. He has said no word. He has not received the book. The Scripture has not been found. Now fancy. Was his mind at sea? As a matter of fact, within three fleeting minutes he is to face his neighbors with a public annunciation of his life career. Then see him take the prophecy in his hand. Does he open the roll as a novice? In an instant he is to utter ponderous words. But as yet his lips are mute. He stands there silent, decisive, self-poised. Here is the Master Teacher, *just about* to teach. Study him.

(c) His *readiness.* He is to explain Isaiah, and talk about God, and the Spirit, and men's need, and the strong good news. Do you suppose he ever studied Isaiah before, or brooded into the meaning of the Spirit's anointing, or walked in close conference with God, or felt for broken lives, or ever thoughtfully conned that message of good news? Was he anything less than fully ready before he commenced? Think. Could he

have had his theme in mind before he found his place? Having his theme, would it be hard to find the fitting Scripture? Suppose they had given him some other Prophet, or the Psalms, or the book of the Law? Note how he reinforced his theme by a citation from the book of Kings. Answer this. How prevalent was this theme in the Hebrew writ? How deeply centered was it in Jesus' life? Do you see the bearing of these simple inquiries? Do you deem it quite worthy in a Christian teacher to let them pass unanswered?

(d) His equipment. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me." "He hath sent me." Here are impulse, and outfit, and authority, and all of infinite scope. Peer into this. It was true, as he entered the synagogue. He was fully furnished before he began. He was prepared to speak before he spoke. He stands fit for the waiting work. He hears the plaint of men. He feels the stirrings of the Holy Spirit. He sees the designation of God. As he rises up and holds the roll, he stands there obedient, compassionate, inspired, fully familiar with the prophetic word. Now weigh all this. Thus the Master stood up to teach. And pause, and be honest, and be intent. What quality or furnishing does Jesus illustrate, that may not be freely shared by you?

2. The Teaching. (a) Christ defines his work. This is a momentous act. See if it is all in this one phrase: Ready help for human need. It is all a word for stricken ones. Study into this. See if there is any word for people who are pain-free, and glad, and whole. What do you say of this? Did the Master wittingly omit, or unwittingly overlook some section of his work? But he focuses all eyes. And all admire. As he speaks of human bonds and hurt and need, all stand marvelling at the unwonted grace and eloquence of his lips. Think. With such a theme, could you command such praise?

(b) But now his message takes a momentous turn. As he went on, wonder awoke. They couldn't see how speech so fair could come from one so plain. And they were saying: "After all this is only our neighbor's son." Ponder this. The stream that seemed so free is checked. But how? Misgivings intrude. They begin to depre-

ciate his words. And the obstruction spreads right athwart the Master's course. What shall he do? Did you ever know such a case? What method do you advise? See what Jesus did. To begin with, he was absolutely plain and frank. He brings their burrowing thoughts up into light. He makes their whisperings audible. In thought they challenge his pretensions and demand some warrant. "Physician heal thyself." To this latent sentiment in them Jesus gives living voice. Now, was this act wise? In reality it helped to rouse and fire their hate and give it open form. But see what follows.

(c) Jesus cites the Phoenician widow and the Syrian leper, mentioned in the books of Kings. In this make special note of two things: both cases were burdened with dire *trouble;* and both were *aliens.* Now, why did Jesus take this turn? Something is awry in his listeners' minds. This twist Jesus is trying to get straight. Can you explain it all? See what it is by seeing what he does. He simply recites the tale of prophetic comfort brought to broken lives in foreign lands. Hereby he shows the beauty of lowly readiness in men for saving help from God; and he publishes God's tenderness towards all bruised sons of men.

Now ponder this. See how it illustrates his theme from Isaiah. See all its implications. It leads the proud, contemptuous man to a lowly seat. It works towards broadening out one's sympathy towards universal grief and loss. It commends the broadest brotherliness. It invites to deepest lowliness. And notice. Only as this is done can Jesus carry on his appointed work unhindered. Till this is done his way is blocked.

Now is this analysis correct? Study it. What words would you italicize? If this is right, does it follow that the attitude of the Nazarenes was a wicked obstinacy of Pharisaic pride? And was Jesus too abrupt? Considering his commission, could he do otherwise? As his teacher, can you state all this clearly, showing the case, showing his brave art, and so defining your own ideal? Laziness just here is hardly becoming.

3. The outcome. Define the issue. They are all in a fit of deadly rage. They even try right there to perpetrate the Master's death. How will you estimate this, as a failure, or a success?

Jesus' eye, as he expounds Isaiah and feels the Spirit, and hears God's mission, is on the needy, the needy everywhere, the needy anywhere. This talk about wounds and blindness and bonds, and about aliens, the lofty and exclusive Galileans resent. Now here is a vital issue. That haughty heartlessness in them, and this yearning of free grace in him can never walk in unison. They are at war. And whatever the battle may come to mean, the battle must be set. And the faithful, gracious Saviour doesn't flinch. Thus he taught. Can you rehearse it all in terse, clear terms? Jesus came to help the hurt, to free the bound, to illumine the blind. Men resent the hint of need and guilt. Christ explodes their self-esteem and aristocracy. They retort with plots of death. This is an early scene in the Master's public life. But scan the Gospels. How often in his swift life did the very like recur? How liable is it all to occur even now? Is it prudent now for teachers to be as direct and decisive as Christ?

4. Teaching hints. (a) As this scene presents Christ, what qualities of his are, as qualities, beyond your reach?

(b) As Christ is seen in this scene, what qualities of his are within your reach? See what is involved in his fellow-feeling for the lowly.

(c) As a guide to your own work, describe those who are likely, and those who are unlikely to welcome saving grace.

(d) The relation of severity and kindliness. These qualities in this scene are worth your study. Was Jesus severe? How did he work it out? Every word was kindly. But he did hew to the line. Work this out. You will find few finer studies. And the Gospels are full of just such webs. You should understand their pattern. It will hardly be worthy of a worthy teacher to give this up.

LESSON IV.

The Winning of Peter.

Luke 5 : 1-11.

1. Make a *picture* in your mind of the scene. Let your imagination play; it is better than any painter's aid. Think of the items: out of doors, by the lake, the boats, the nets, the fishermen, the vain night's toil, the throngs, Jesus at the center, the pressure about him. Make the scene clear—the scene in which Peter is enlisted as a fisher of men under Christ.

What drew those throngs so compactly together? Make room in your thought for Christ's attracting power. Think of the open display of Christ's influence upon his fellow-men. This must have caught Peter's eye at the start. He saw Christ's power; he saw the throngs, eager towards the Master.

2. Duly Christ singles out Peter. Have in mind his aim. Watch his way of doing it.

(a) He enlisted Peter's boat. Mark this. The Master of the throngs, the center of the multitude's desire, used Peter's little fishing boat to prosecute his work. This was a moving act. It must have stirred the pride and thought and heart of Peter.

He entered it as Master. Peter and his boat were subject to Jesus' word. Peter was not his own. Think of this. Imagine Peter refusing. But why did he so instantly obey? Something lordly in the Master must have been evident. Think carefully here. There is a fine deal of teaching power resident in one's very being and style.

Peter set the boat and held it so as best to adjust the Master to the throng. Imagine his carefulness to do this right. Think of his being careless and clumsy and unhelp-

ful with his boat. Surely he would swing it about with an expert hand, and hold it in line with the Master's easiest use. But why? Be sure to answer. Just here Peter was an adept. This humble but helpful skill Jesus employed in a mighty enterprise. And Peter did his best. Measure what it meant, and how it came about, to what it led along.

(b) There sits Peter, just behind the Lord, in easy reach. How would he be employed while Jesus taught? Would he be watching the boat? Why? Would he be studying the throng? Would he be pondering the Master, sitting there right against his knee, pouring heavenly messages into human ears? Think. What must have passed through Peter's soul, while the Master taught, and the people sat attent, and he steadied the boat. Think, too, of Christ. Would he be engrossed with the audience on the shore? Or would he be constantly conscious of Peter, sitting just behind his back? To whom was the Master fitting that speech, to the men before, or to the man behind?

(c) Fasten in your mind some picture of Jesus' manner, as he closed his address and turned around to Peter. Think here earnestly. What was Peter's mood and attitude at that momentous instant? How far had Jesus got in winning Peter's heart? Imagine. What would Peter next expect, his hands upon the familiar oars? Study this. Mighty interests are astir. Study the Master's way. What do you think—and do not fail to think this out all by yourself—what do you think was the most likely *next* step to secure Peter's discipleship? Do not let your mind be empty here. Think something out.

(d) That order to pull for the open sea and find the deep. Connect this with the influence and likely outcome of the teaching by the shore. How would the two combine in winning Peter's life-long love? Mark Peter's hesitancy. He had worn out the night in tedious, futile toil. He was worn and void of hope. But see his mood depart. Jesus' word commands his will and he instantly sets to pulling out to sea. Stop and study this. How far has Jesus got in gaining Peter's loyalty for life? And how has it been done? And what remains

to do? Evidently the Lord may work his will. Peter is under his hand.

(e) That haul. Read into Jesus' mind. Why a miracle? Why this? Why so bountiful? At its heart, what did it mean? Jesus had regard for Peter's body; he needed food. He had respect for Peter's trade; he honored his nets. He had a sense of Peter's failure; he reversed his disappointment. Ponder this. Jesus showed himself to Peter, and to Peter all alone, a skillful, respectful, sympathetic helper and Lord. Heed every word, every turn. They are warp and woof of the Master's art. So he won his man.

(f) Now look upon the *wonder* of it all. Who was Jesus, anyway? Recall his marvellous dominion over the multitude, his authority over Peter's boat, his sovereignty in beckoning towards the deep, his mastery of the fullness of the sea, his perfect lordship over every phase of Peter's being and life. Take the measure of all this. Get a living sense of the stature and majesty of Christ as he loomed in Peter's boat. Then, Peter's prostration at the last. Why was this? Just what did it mean? Was it of purpose in Jesus' mind that Peter should be overawed? Was it comely in Peter? Was it welcome to Christ? Imagine that sentiment of deep reverence omitted from the scene and from the heart of Peter. Just what was its value; and just how was it wrought? Was it really needful in an introduction to the Apostolate?

(g) Now make your most careful list of Jesus' qualities, and of Peter's sentiments, aiming to find the essential things in the work of enlisting a disciple of Christ. In Christ you will instantly think of majesty, friendliness, tact. But what more? In Peter you will name obedience, humility, devotedness. But what more? Then ponder that commission. Measure well each word. Do this. Here is a chance for an ample page of choicest appreciation of Jesus' words.

3. **Teaching hints.** (a) Jesus taught from a boat. No cathedral, no choir, no vestments, no consecrated implements of any sort. What are the essentials of any

teaching? What in all soberness, are the real necessities for effective teaching under Christ?

(b) The power of mere *manner*. Picture the Master's appearance through all this: as he stood in the focus of the throng; as he threaded out; as he stepped into the boat (would he be awkward?); as he seemed to Peter's eye, while speaking to the throng; as he surveyed the sea and chose where to drop the net; as the boat stood full; as he quieted Peter's fear? Think of this mere manner, mute but strong.

(c) The transit of Christ's attention from the multitude to Peter.

(d) The simplicity, majesty, familiarity of Christ: how entirely, in him, these three agree!

LESSON V.

Answering Deadly Critics.

John 5 : 10-47.

1. The occasion. Jesus had so healed a man on the Sabbath as to violate current Sabbath rules. This he was doing continually. The Jews took offense and were continually assailing him. Jesus finally said that in it all he was only imitating God. At this the Jews took high offense. Such statements smelt of blasphemy. But study this from Jesus' side. See what it put at stake. By such a charge he stood beleaguered on every side. It essayed to undo his mission, his honor, his standing with God, his life. This is a sharp and vital case. Now follow the Master's method.

2. His Teaching. (a) He protests perfect fellowship with God (v. 19). He denies that he does anything apart from God. He and the Father deeply agree.

(b) This fellowship is not in fractions (v. 20). It is complete. The deeds of Father and Son are fully, exhaustively alike. All that the Father does he shows the Son. All that the Son beholds he freely does.

(c) This co-partnership is due to love (v. 20). The Father loves the Son. Hence his revelation is absolutely unrestrained. Hence their unison in full fellowship of knowledge and deed. This is all. But see how complete it is. Work it over. It offers two persons—Father and Son. It points to one bond—love. Father, Son, Love. Ponder those three words. Into what measureless deeps they lead! They are simple words indeed, familiar to us all. But no profounder themes were ever opened into human speech. Study here the Master's poise and skill and power. His words are plain as any peasant's. But he is impregnable, resistless, irrefutable.

(d) But he not only defends, he expands his claims.

He says that greater deeds than any yet in evidence are in God's design. In illustration he mentions two: he has received authority to raise the dead; and he has received authority to act as universal judge. He is to sit creative and supreme at the primal origin, and the ultimate issue of human life. Get the range of this assertion. It is fundamental, ultimate. Nothing human lies beneath or above or beyond its scope.

Sit here awhile. Get the measure of the majesty of your Master's mind and will. Men plot his death and spit upon his dignity. But he is no craven. And he is no weakling either. Study him as he talks on.

(e) Now scale the summit of Christ's claim (v. 23). Here is the top of his filial and official self-consciousness. By the Father's design he, the Son, is to receive with the Father equal honor. Here is something superb. Stay in its presence. It is an unmeasured self-assertion. But it is said in filial beauty and grace. And notice how closely it is in keeping with his words about the Father's love.

(f) Try now to *unify* all these claims. See how all is engrossed in the love of the Father for the Son. Hence the revelation, hence the knowledge, hence the authority, hence the honor. All flows out of the love of the Father for the Son. This is his reply. Do you detect its nature? It is strictly a self-assertion. *Himself* is his reply. Alive through all his being with strong good-will towards men, with a sense of the Father's infinite love, and with a triumphant consciousness of his own Godlike majesty and worth, he stands forth before his critical and deadly foes, and offers himself as his complete and final answer and defense. But study it again as a whole. See how he deals with his calumniators. He simply opens the fact of his own Sonship, the fact of God's Fatherhood, the fact of love—these three. See how these three agree in one. See how he unveils and unburdens the meaning of things. See how simple he is, but how deep, and how wise, and how gentle, and how strong. See how it all coheres. Try to pick his answer apart, and throw away some part, and keep the rest. It cannot be done. Christ's claim of Sonship within God's

Fatherly love enfolds inseparably all he says. His answer is a unit. He plants a central bulwark, and thus holds all. Love—its Fatherly affluence, its Filial zeal—this is all. How plain! How omnipotent!

(g) But he not only defends and expands and culminates his claim; he also *assails* (vv. 33-47). See him undo their strength. The witness of John; the testimony of my deeds; the attestation of God; the words of Moses and ancient Scripture—all these substantiate my claim. All these you ostensibly respect. But really, the evidence of them all you contemn and defy. You part from John; you abjure God's word; you murmur at my works; your trust in Moses is not real. The Godly you reject. God's honor you ignore. Your real craving is for praise of men. You are not of God.

Now digest this paragraph. Get its gist. It is all in v. 44. It is a grave and grievous thrust. But terrible as is the blow, it must be struck. These men are charging blasphemy. They are ready for his blood. They make for the Master's very heart. Such is their assault. His counter thrust must be equally direct and to the point. Hence he deals *two* blows: one in self-defense; and one in counter assault. He is the filial center of the Father's love. They are void of any word or vision of God. Such are the power and point of Christ's defense; and such are the point and power of his attack. In both, his majesty stands infinite, shining like the sun.

3. Now unify the chapter. One benevolent deed; an inhuman anxiety about Sabbath regulations; a zealous protestation of copartnership with God; a verdict of the deadly sin of blasphemy; a counter verdict of ungodly eagerness for human praise. This is the chapter entire. Who stands for God, Jesus or the Jews? This is the whole of it. And it is a whole. The circle is entire. It is a sketch in miniature of all the Master's work. He stands there glorious, complete. So he teaches. Such he is. Do you care to attempt some outline of his figure?

(**a**) Note his mood. It is instinct with benevolence. Keep that scene of healing in mind. It is the core of the Master's strength. It is the very voice of God within his life.

(**b**) Fathom his thoroughness. He propounds instantly his most fundamental claim. His actions hail from God. Study his two illustrations—resurrection and judgment. Ponder further their weight.

(**c**) Look upon his *courage*. How unflinchingly bold that allusion to his destined honor. Such valor is born of Truth. And see how he presses the battle to the gate. And he left nothing of his undefended, nothing of theirs unrebuked. His mettle is ample, and it is all true steel.

(**d**) Measure the meaning he puts into Love. It is like a law of gravity. It dominates all his being.

(**e**) See his mighty jealousy for sincere faith in verity. How he glows at the attestations of John, of Moses, of God, of his own deeds, as he felt his enemies' disrespect!

(**f**) Notice where his strength is lodged. All his logic roots in *character*. He is the offspring of pure Love. His nutriment is Truth. Try to undo anything he said. You must first despoil his honor. You must disprove his origin. As kindly, faithful, well-beloved Son of God, he stands unanswerable, invincible. You may well spend many a day in the light and atmosphere of this scene, if you really seek for skill to teach.

LESSON VI.

Dealing with Doubt.

Matt. 11 : 2-19.

1. John. (a) Think of his ardent zeal, his moral vigor, his fine courage, his burdened, strenuous life, his multitudinous following. (b) Think of his formal work on Christ in baptism and introduction, and of his self-renunciation as the Master's mission grew. (c) Think of his imprisonment, and life peril, and lone and long delay. (d) Think of his liability to look innocently for greater suddenness and brilliancy of outer majesty in the appearance and work of the Messiah than Jesus actually displayed. (e) Think of the strength and subtlety of temptation seizing on one's darkest hour and weakest point; and of God's mysteries of Providence; and of the seeming primacy of wrong. (f) Think how his disciples might chafe under the humiliation of their lord; and that John may possibly have sent his followers to Christ for their sake, and not for his own.

2. John's inquiry. "Art thou, or some other one the Christ?" Compute the gravity of this question. Let its urgency get full possession of your mind. In its answer John's prestige would be shattered or confirmed. And it opened into all the meaning of Jewish, Messianic hope. It looked toward God. It involved the matter of heavenly revelation. It was a query searching out the way to ultimate truth. And for Jesus, it was a challenge of his topmost worth, his inmost strength, his uttermost authority. Few graver questions could be framed. Do you suppose the disciples who brought the query understood its scope? Were they looking in the right direction for a reply? Did you ever study this matter of questions? It is worth your thought. Many inquiries

were flung up to Christ. Look them up. List their precise contents. Mark their actual aim. Then examine them again in the light of Christ's replies.

3. Christ's answer. For reply Jesus wrought a rich variety of benefits for men. In dispensing these benefactions he selected the blind, lame, leprous, deaf, dead and poor—men from the ranks of the sick, the plagued, the demoniacs. This, and only this, is Christ's reply, except that he cautions against offense. This done, he sends the disciples back to recite to John the things they saw.

Now study this reply. It is Jesus' way, as teacher, of giving instruction on a vital theme to these inquiring men. Can you gather some hints on how to teach?

(a) The answer was *manifold.* Those miracles were numerous. Can you master this? Can you get form and content apart? The form was those miracles; these were plural, various. But how about the content? What did they all *mean?* At heart, was Jesus' answer simple or manifold? Did he proffer several themes; or did he proffer only one appeal, with several illustrations? What would you say to this: He demonstrates humanity's complete deliverance from woe? Or this: He manifests complete, omnipotent compassion for our broken lot? Which is the better summary? Just where lies their difference? And after all, was it any adequate reply to John's inquiry?

(b) The answer was not direct. It led a devious way, from Christ's inner intent, through things external and marvellous, through various definite deeds, through different and dissimilar witnesses, through oral, second-hand accounts, through John's mental ponderings, to its final form in John's conclusion. Now what do you say to this? Why could Christ not be more explicit and direct and precise? Why not answer "yes" outright? But notice Christ's way. What do you think was Jesus' teaching theory here? Which is the better, the wisest way; to dictate replies, or to draw them out? John would have to arrange, and study, and ponder, and interpret. Thus the real reply to John's question would, in a very real sense, be John's own work. Think of this.

(c) The answer is conveyed by *reporters.* Jesus did not go himself. He held aloof, unheard and unseen by John. The inquirer had to trust to witnesses. The answer was second-hand. And then the report was plural. It had a double tongue. There were two to observe, two to estimate, two to give the recital. Doubtless their stories diverged. They would not see or hear or think or talk in fullest precision alike. Look into this. It raises the whole question of the accuracy, honor, credibility, discrepancy and personal element of witnesses. Do you see just where this leads? And remember. You are not dealing with the Bible now; you are dealing with Christ. See what you judge his views about witnesses to be.

(d) The answer cautions against offense. Both sides of this deserve your thought—the side of John, and the side of Christ. Think here. Christ is liable to *give* offense. This demands your eye. Watch him with this in view right through his life. See how many times he fully expected and bravely proceded to give offense. Recall the scene at Nazareth. And John, with other men, is liable to *take* offense. Find illustrations. Study sharply the incident offered here. Can you find any irksome element in what the Saviour said or did? What was it that moved the Lord to voice that warning word? All he said and all he did seems vestured with a beautiful grace. Why then anticipate offense? Study into this. Find out what Jesus was driving at. Read this whole chapter with this one thought in mind. Study all he says of John—his edged inquiries, his glowing praise, his words of mystery, disclosing John's rare eminence, and the Jews' abhorrence of his ways. Then study all the Master says about himself, and about their disdain and spleen in the face of all his friendly grace. They voted the Baptist a demoniac, and Jesus a glutton. They took stiff offense. Get into this. What is its drift? Read all the chapter over. Weigh those pointed hints at poverty, and leprosy, and demon-possession, and death, and disease, and need. And think. To whom is such talk musical? What are the inner implications of Christ's grace? How is it bound to strike the whimsical and

unpenitent and insincere? Clear and thorough thinking here is worth your while. This is no minor incident.

4. Teaching hints.

(**a**) See the Master work into lowliest lives the formal demonstration of his heavenliness.

(**b**) See how he leaves inquirers to ponder on his ways.

(**c**) See his supreme respect for man's own judgment. He leaves his case to John.

(**d**) See how he offers a section out of his familiar, every-day life as ample answer to an ultimate challenge of his mission. He gave nothing novel. Just what had been occurring every day was quite enough. Study John 10:25.

(**e**) Think thus of human dullness; and of Jesus' patience.

(**f**) See if you can formulate Christ's philosophy in dealing with doubt.

LESSON VII.

Rest Under Burdens.

Matt. 11 : 20-30.

1. The vital situation. (a) The occasion of Christ's comments. He had done many mighty deeds in Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum—deeds that would have won Tyre and Sidon and Sodom. But these people would not repent. Here rise *hard problems.* The favors of Providence differ. Results are strangely variant. Fidelity stands unrewarded. Most lavish labors of love are futile. The same labors, done elsewhere, would have availed. Do not haste here. Labor to enter into Christ's lot. Think of his desires towards these cities. Think of his vital outlay. Think of his persistence and repetition of effort. Think of the point of attack—sins. Think of his deep moral abhorrence, and of their evil insistence. Here is effort, long-drawn, tireless, multiform; and here is opposition, cold, wicked, obdurate. Enter into this. No distress could be more rending. Do you feel it?

(b) Christ's attitude towards God. Study here with sympathy. Jesus is in sore trouble. He takes refuge in God (vv. 25-27). Mark the elements.

He calls God "Father" and "Lord." Note each word. Set them well apart. Get the weight and meaning of each by itself. Then balance them. See their value. Providences vary, but God is not unkind or unfair; he is "Father." Though his messages are mocked, he is not dethroned; he is "Lord." Study this combination. Those two titles are two pillars. They can bear aloft a goodly arch of heavenly trust, and steady any soul in any lot in perfect quietness. He speaks of God's "good pleasure," freely and gladly conceding that its sovereignty was supreme. This is the Master's explicit creed. Note it. He sees that God adjusts himself to men, pouring light

into childlike lives, and leaving the scornful and self-satisfied to wander in their own ways. He recalls and avows the infinite fullness of sole fellowship of Father with Son, and his blessed mission as free revealer of the Father's name. He confesses close and *utter acquiescence* with God in all his free, Fatherly, sovereign, discerning rule. Thus Jesus turns from Capernaum to God—with an eagle eye, with a humble heart, in filial unison.

(c) Now hold these two realities—Christ's deep sorrow over Capernaum, and his utter acquiescence in God—*together*. Study them well. In those hard conflicts in Capernaum—the unrelaxing onset of his infinite strength upon all wrong, against the unrelenting preference of their hearts for willful sin—his soul was tossed in an *infinite unrest*. But in this full and genial fellowship of Father and Son his soul is filled with an *infinite peace*. Study these two. Each is a reality. Each sits immense within his life. In his true being everything is genuine. As he looks upon the costly outlay of his life in Chorazin, and sees the awful issue, his anguish is a real Gethsemane; he feels the very torture of the cross. But as he takes refuge in God, the compassionate Father, the Sovereign Lord, the discerning Judge of all, his anguish is all assuaged.

(d) Here is something worth your keenest watchfulness. Your Master is standing here in the very thick of one of the deepest problems of life and thought. Do you see this? If you fail, you have your deepest lessons yet to learn. Review this scene, not aimlessly, but with precise design. Persist, until it all stands *real*. With keen mind and compliant heart he abides patiently in his place. Examine well your Master here. He is teaching by *example*. He consciously assumes a model attitude. He guides the burdened life into rest by adjusting his own bruised heart to acquiescent trust. He is saying "Learn of me." And as he speaks he stands beneath his own life's mystery and hurt in perfect rest of patient trust.

2. Special aspects of Christ. (a) Seeming defeat. Give this your thought. Jesus is a moral teacher. He

is training followers and co-workers. His aim is utter conquest of sin. But in these three cities, where his labors had been most profuse, he meets a stiff repulse. In such a plight what would you do? Watch Christ. He does not modify his claims one whit. No passage in all four Gospels swings into a grander strain than he voices here. He and the sovereign Father are perfectly at one. This experience is *no defeat.*

(b) Christ's moral strength. Study that phrase, "They repented not." What lay back of that? A crisis. Jesus had laid bare their sins. He had outlined and published their very life. That discovery was absolute. When his work was done, sin stood plain and black. Study, too, those words announcing a "judgment" to come. Their career is not yet complete. Portentous days are yet to come. Then note his comparisons. Sodom and Capernaum do not stand alike. How he discriminates! Jesus is not repulsed. He dominates all the scene, as a moral force.

(c) See his penetration. As he faces the differing actions of men, he traces out their roots. Some have open minds, like little infants. Note his words. Others spurn all counsel, being in their own eyes all-wise. Similarly he ponders into God's diversities and finds their grounds. He is free. Mark this. He is Lord. He is Father. He transcends all finite minds. Here are deep words. They show a piercing *insight.* Do you see this?

(d) The sweep of his mind. His range touches ultimates. "They repented not." There his labors halt. He respects man's choice. Man is free. And yet, watch the Master's flight. He speaks of the "judgment." Man's impenitence is not the end. Then that phrase, "Lord of heaven and earth." Measure it, as Jesus must have done. And do not be too eager to hurry on. To make haste here is to stand in your old tracks. That affirmation about his Sonship and commission. His thought here takes far flights into deep interior realms. Make some honest effort to follow him. His challenge of all who labor. How far abroad does that short sentence sweep? Here is something of which we ought to know. But are you sure you can reach the bounds of

his thoughts in your own and your nearest neighbor's life? Lay plans for taking time and spending thought here.

(e) The blending of gentleness and strength. As Jesus offers himself here, two relations appear. He stands over against whole cities, set in stern antagonism. But he neither surrenders nor flees. He presents himself to them as a mighty headland, braving all the anger of a surging sea. He is kingly strong. Study your Lord, as he teaches by example here. He bears the world's full shock of sin and need. He stands in impregnable peace. He holds irresistible control. He offers omnipotent aid. He accosts with courtliest grace. Thus the Master teaches. He handles royal themes. He shows royal art.

3. Teaching hints.

(a) "Most" of his mighty works. How many would this be? Why so many? Would they vary?

(b) He sought "repentance." This is all. Study repentance—how difficult, how repulsive, how essential, how primary, how searching. Imagine Jesus making some compromise.

(c) The depth of discord between a teacher battling, and a pupil cherishing sin.

(d) Imagine the last vanishing of hope.

(e) List Christ's qualities in Capernaum: thoroughness, patience, good-will, respect, consistency, power, calmness.

(f) List Christ's qualities, as he issues his call to burdened lives: insight, self-respect, triedness, Godliness, lowliness, peacefulness.

(g) Now combine all these elements, and study the combination in its real life, as he stands teaching his followers by his very being, as the kind, true, pure, lowly, calm, patient, strong friend of man and Son of God.

LESSON VIII.

Teaching Mercy to a Pharisee.

Luke 7 : 36-50.

1. Realize the scene. (a) Study the Gospel feasts, to get clear as to their customs. Gather together out of this one paragraph as many distinct details of a feast as you can. Get a sense of their ideas of courtesy, of their ways of showing respect, of the manner of their hospitality.

(b) Try to reach some opinion about Simon. Look into the meaning of his neglect to provide for his guest water and oil, and to greet him with any kiss. Think how it came about that Simon invited Christ. There must have been some close attention and some real respect on his part towards Christ. Estimate this from Christ's point of view. There was some vantage ground for the Master's work during this feast. Yet it comes clear that Simon was lacking in deep fellowship with Christ's views of grace. Study his moral attitude. He was a Pharisee. And he was Pharisaic. He looked askance at people he called "sinners." He had not the Master's eye to see the worth of a broken heart. He invited Christ; but in the heart of that invitation there was no thought of fostering any work of saving mercy. But in his welcome of Christ, scant though it was, there was involved the presence of this "sinner."

(c) Give attentive heed to the woman. Try to see her, as Simon saw her—an outcast, corrupt, unpromising. Try to see her, as she saw herself—a wicked, broken, worthless life. Try to see her, as Jesus saw her—unclean, but penitent and eager for his mercy. Study the power and havoc of her sin. See the beauty already evident in her life—her deep respect for Christ, her out-

lay for his sake, her profound humility, her fine courage, her signs of thoughtfulness. See if sorrow and love sum it all up.

(d) Study all the manner of Christ. He honored the invitation. He bore quietly the meagerness of his host's attentions. He forbore all signs of dislike or surprise at the woman's humble, costly ministry. He studied into the deeps of all he saw. His mind was quite as active and quite as accurate as Simon's. Think of the Master as winning, and then receiving, and then accepting, and then improving this invitation from this cool and lofty Pharisee.

Study the scene over and over. Scan each party. Get their inner qualities, their outward appearance, their past career, their present standing vividly in view. Feel after the life philosophy of each. Fix upon the central feature of it all. Was it Simon's moral shock? This deserves your thought. You ought to answer it. Only so will you see what Christ was driving at.

2. Christ's instruction. (a) The parable. Here is an exquisite gem, if you have eyes to see. But at its every turn your insight must be moral. Are you sure you know just what this means? To start—can you see why Jesus devised a parable? What is its peculiar value in the teaching art in general, and in this case in particular? Its theme—two debtors. Why "debtors"? Why "two"? Do not rush on. Every word has weight.

"Nothing to pay." Both were bankrupt. Why bankrupt? Why both? Do you see? How would Simon estimate these points?

"Forgave them both." Why the idea of forgiveness? Why forgiveness for two? Would Simon see the point? Do you? "Which of them will love the most?" Why a question here? Do not scorn this. It is a vital point in teaching. Why, at the vital point, refer the whole case to the pupil? Why did he put the question to Simon? Why did he center it about "love"? This question involved what? You should not shrink or shirk here. Things are getting rather pointed for Simon. Do you see this? Just what is the point? After all, which way does the point turn? Ponder the whole parable

now. Its outer aspect is perfectly innocent and simple. But it can pinch bitterly. And it has sweet solace. It so portrays two people that the one who enters the scene under the deepest reproach emerges with the highest praise. Ponder this. Its skill is peerless. Think of the seats at that feast. How did Simon arrange his guests? Where would he place himself? How would Jesus' teaching rearrange the feast?

(b) The direct talk to Simon. Note every word. It is no parable now. Picture the flash and aim of Jesus' eye. Heed the crisp, swift words that leap from the edges of his well-trained lips. Trace the sharp precision of every single phrase. See how he bids Simon keep his eye on the woman, as he sends the terse indictment home. And remember, Simon is host, and Jesus is guest. "I entered your house. I was bidden in by you. You gave me no water. You gave me no kiss. You gave me no oil. Now look upon this lowly object of your high contempt. See what she does. For want of water she uses her tears. For want of a towel she uses her hair. Her kisses fall in showers. And in place of oil, she has lavished costly ointment. She is a sinner indeed; and her lapses are multiplied. But the tides of her sorrow and love are full. She has my costliest favor. Her sins are pardoned. But in your scant life, with its little love and little grief, is little forgiveness." Surely here is teaching that is to the point. Name its traits.

(c) The word to the woman. According to the record, those words are few. But read the whole recital through again, with this humble sinner alone in mind. Do you judge her blind or deaf? How much of all the Saviour said would she appropriate? Those two debtors—which would she say was meant for her? That sentence about forgiveness—how would that be seized by her? And then the Master's mention of her kisses and precious ointment and bitter tears—and all in terms of contrast with Simon's parade of hospitality—what message did her heart obtain from this? And finally that outright pledge of pardon and the tender counsel to go her way in peace—do not fail to think how she would feel, as she found her loving, contrite heart bathed

in the light of such instruction in the Saviour's work of grace.

3. Teaching hints.

(a) See how Christ's influence worked on these two people *before* this feast. His power is finely manifest within this scene. But vital factors lie back there in former scenes, out of sight. Influence in a teacher's life has its roots and growth, as well as its ripened fruit.

(b) Christ drew about himself opposite sorts. He had real breadth.

(c) Christ's thoughts of men were most distinguishing and distinct. He did not view nor handle all alike.

(d) Trace to its *root* Simon's error. What was his point of view?

(e) Can you formulate any of Jesus' axioms? What was his point of view?

(f) Watch the Master's eye. See how he finds big meanings in small things. And he noted everything.

(g) See how Christ drew out of his pupil his fundamental truth.

(h) Study pupils. In the school of Christ, what makes a pupil apt? What makes a pupil dull? With Christ as teacher, where lay the difference between Simon and the woman, as regards docility?

(i) See how deeply Christ suffered his life to be inserted into other lives, in order to gain a vantage ground for teaching.

LESSON IX.

How Greed for Goods Stifles Souls.

Luke 12 : 13-21.

1. Study the case brought to Jesus' hand. It is two brothers. Bred of a single sire, reared in a common home, they should have lived in mutual, continual love. But though of closest common interest, and nearest kin, sharers hitherto in a common fund, there somehow comes a break. They fail to lovingly agree. The partition of the estate seems to be delayed. There lie the funds between them. Each is destined to have a share. It is the duty of both to agree to divide. Both eye the pile. Each sees that its partition is sure to come. But the business halts. Either one is over eager; or the other is over slow. Probably the elder brother proscrastinates, loving the control of funds, and growing cold towards the second-born. Eut the younger brother hates delay. He covets to have his part. He is hot for division. Thus comes strife. One hastes. One nalts. One grasps to hold it all. One grasps to get his share. Both hearts grow heated in the thirst of greed. Towards each other both hearts grow cold. They lose the filial sense of the father's solicitous care. Forgetful to love like brothers, or to be reverent towards a father's wish, they stand upon the edge of fratricidal hate. Such is the case, such the cause, and such the outlook towards a dreadful end.

2. Jesus' treatment. (a) He declines to arbitrate. This seems almost unwise. But search into the Master's thought. Why did he refuse? Think deeply here. In our day everybody counsels towards such acts of reference. Surely the wisdom and honor of Christ would be adequate for such a court. But see. Jesus himself resists the first approach. And in what he instantly adds

we see the reason. He detects the rage of greed in both those brothers' hearts. His thought cuts down beneath that call for his decision. Such a judgment would effect no cure. When two brothers are at odds about a patrimony, and their disagreement amounts to strife, the Master's eye detects that the only way to reconcile their lives is to cut out all that overgrowth of greed. On this conviction is based all the teaching that this lesson yields. Now, viewing Jesus as a teacher, were his act and attitude correct? In a strictly similar case, would you discourage the resort to a referee? Have care here. A good deal turns on your reply.

(b) His caution against covetousness. Sit down here and look in upon his words at length. They are very few. But measure every one. How direct, how sweeping, how intense they are! His theme, covetousness. Scan its face. Feel its fire and power. Imagine its action, just for once; only one sole outburst of pure greed. What is its quality? From what does it spring? How does it consort with love? When, as here, it grasps for material things, how does it affect the spirit of man? Did you ever stop to study covetousness? Here is your chance. Note well that word "all." It is short, but its sweep is boundless. It more than hints that greed is manifold and oft recurrent. And it counsels to be keen, and to keep keen. Detect its varying guise. Learn to uncover it every time. Do not suffer its action *once*. Keep resolute against it. Keep alert. Keep free from covetousness. Keep forever free. Here is fine teaching. Do you see how profoundly wise he is? Do you feel how tense he is? Tarry right here. Good marks of good teaching are right in sight.

(c) That pointed hint at the wide difference between a man's "life" and his "possessions." Ponder over "life." Did you ever define it? Begin right here. Begin by contrasting it with "goods." What, deeply what, is the difference? Then weigh the word itself. Weigh "life." Surely you must not use "death" or "decay" or any essential "change" in inventing its definition. It is *life*. It has deep fountains within itself. It is thus essentially immortal and free. Follow this up. Think of it as

Jesus would. Here again is the very rock on which his teachings rest. Get your own feet fast on the same sure base.

3. The parable. Scan every feature. Remember its occasion. Keep referring it back to those two brothers.

(a) Note that plethora of goods. Detect their nature. They come out of the ground. They are God's gift. They are the outcome of man's toil. They are life's sustenance. But they are all material, decaying.

(b) Listen to the farmer's monologue. He gleans and garners all; and as he scans the heaping fruits, his palate and his paunch become the eager, happy center of his life. He bids his soul relax. He bids his appetite awake. He plans for years of long-drawn, steaming feasts. He plans for nothing else. He plans to eat, and eat, and eat again. The ever recurring call to feast is to him the acme of delight.

But it is also the very emblem of decay. He continually hungers again. All his heaped up edibles can never make him full. In very fact all his merry round of feasts is but a heedless dance with *death*. All its joys are mortal. Its inevitable issue is the grave.

And all the while his immortal soul subsists unfed. To this inner deathless being, this potent, tireless energy, he stupidly exclaims, "desist; relax; give over work; take thine ease." And to his gross flesh he says, "Do nought but eat; think only of steaming kettles, and brewing pots, and foaming cups; wallow in gluttony; call this merriment." And so he also forgets his neighbor's life. (Recall the two brothers.) And he ignores his God; he stores no wealth with him. Thus the Master paints the covetous, the man of greed, the man whose primal care is for material goods, the man who is hot for his inheritance. He forgets his God; he disowns his brother; he stifles himself.

(c) Now face the Master's word, "Thou fool!" Is this too rude? Is it unwise? Is it untrue? Do you dare condemn it? Would it be your probable retort? If not, why not? Have you your Master's sense of the havoc and sin of covetousness? This is by no means his only reference Would you care to glean from the

Gospels your Master's relative estimates of soul and body, of spiritual and material things, of things decaying and things eternal? Possibly surprises await you here.

(d) And now the lazy, care-free epicure, of a sudden, dies—an undeveloped soul forced to face his forgotten God. Despite his barns, he stands there beggar-poor. For all his piling wealth he has been sternly forced to sign a full release. Soul and body have had to part. And now he stands in final judgment, stripped and starved—an utter bankrupt. Thus he deals with the man who gluts his body and starves his heart. Thus he handles the man who in his passion for gain falls to fighting with his brother. Such is the death of men whose barns and feasts eclipse their God and the life to come. It is their absolute undoing and defeat.

4. Now try to sense the value of the Master's art in this teaching scene.

(a) Get its sum. Greed may never be indulged, not even once, nor in any style. Once indulged, no arbitration can effect a cure.

Fully grown, it makes a man a fool, plays havoc with fraternity, and sets a soul in poverty before its God. Study this.

(b) Characterize this teaching. Can it compromise or relent? Does it fit this case? Is it widely apt? Or, would it mostly be out of place?

(c) How about its thoroughness? He is really dealing with matters of life and death. Would you have detected this in that brother's simple request?

(d) Christ introduced the word "covetousness." The brother introduced the fact. Thus Christ uncovers, brings to the eye essentials which our eyes are prone to overlook.

(e) See the Master's mighty boldness. He stands squarely across the path of one of the most eager and far-spread passions of human life—the greed for goods.

(f) Note the fire of Jesus' jealousy for spiritual life and growth. Measure his strenuousness against the earnestness of greed.

(g) Define the skill demanded in any practical handling of greed.

LESSON X.

The Logic of Trust.

Luke 12 : 22-30.

1. The occasion. Keep in mind those two brothers quarreling over their father's estate. Carefully review the parable of the prospered, glutton-farmer. Stay by that parable until the Master's ardent soul enkindles you. But do not fail to understand the tremendous difference in the Saviour's outlook. When fashioning that parable of the "Rich fool," he was trying to break down a man's excessive greed for perishing things. In this succeeding paragraph the Lord is fully recognizing every man's physical need, and arguing most carefully to show how all our bodily wants are in the open circle of God's intelligent care. The two lessons need conning together.

2. Arguments for trusting God for bodily needs. As men face ceaseless calls for food and clothes, their souls become commonly distraught. They are prone to fret away their peace. But all that worry is vain. And it has no ground. Men should live in Godly trust.

(a) The "life" is more than "meat." The "body" is more than "raiment." Here is a mighty argument. It finely illustrates a prevalent quality in Jesus' teaching art. He goes to the *roots*. Pursue his thought. You who sweat and haste and fret in face of hunger for fear that food will fail, think of your body, of your being, your life. This is the fundamental thing. But this is no product of your anxiety and toil. It is the handiwork of God. He creates man's body. Here he holds an absolute monopoly. Think into this. No mortal can by any expense of carefulness spin a single nerve, or kindle in the living eye a single flash of light. But God can carve the shoulder, mould the thigh, build up

the neck, design the head, expand the lungs, coil up the tireless muscles of the heart, weave the tingling nerves, lay channels everywhere for tides of vital blood, teach every organ when to call for food, when to say enough, how to deal with waste, when to wake to effort, when to sink to rest. God, and God alone, builds up and finishes the human frame. Its stature and symmetry are all designed by him. The wisest, mightiest man is too weak and ignorant to cleave and double a single cell. Man can never build an eye, nor plant an ear. God does it all. Such is your body; such your life. He who employs such transcendent skill and might to frame the marvellous complex of the human frame, will surely lay within easy reach all suitable attire, and reward all worthy toil with convenient food.

(b) God feeds the birds that neither sow nor reap nor own a single barn. From cankering care their little lives are wholly free. They never hoard; but they never fret or fear. The distant day and the distant need lie all beyond their ken. They never know what anxious worry is. Each day, though filled with busy search, is also filled with song. They are lively messengers to men of lifelong, unflecked happiness under the sleepless thoughtfulness of God. The Father ever feedeth them. But men outrank the birds. Then men should cease to fret, and learn to trust in God.

(c) God decks each lily in the field, though they never sow, and never spin. And when the heavenly work is done, no earthly robe, not even Solomon's, can match their web or hue. And yet their bloom and texture fade and perish in a day. But man outranks, and far outlasts the grass. Far more surely then will he have beautiful attire. Most surely, then, should each immortal child of God forego to fret lest he should go unclad.

(d) To fret is futile anyway. Try it. Try it in the matter of your size, your height, the fixed destiny of your days. Add one cubit, if you can. It is all beyond your hand. It has all been fixed by God. If now, in such rudiments, you are totally impotent, why do you become distraught in things that will surely ensue?

(e) Then, finally, he who feeds the birds, and beautifies the fields, and knits your frame, and sets the number of your days, is not a cold, far-off, unheeding Lord. He is your Father. You have a first-hand title to his faithfulness. Make room for this. He is your Father, omnipotent, affectionate, all-wise. Cast all your care on him.

3. **Studies.** Here is a masterly illustration of Christ's teaching skill. Keep in mind the background:—those unfraternal brothers; that feasting, lazy fool, summoned suddenly to his tomb; the universal anxiousness of men about far-distant needs. In all those scenes he sees a beautiful, deathless soul of a precious child of God stifled and submerged by waves of wicked worldliness. He longs to lift it out and give it light and air and liberty. Closely watch, as he unclusters the twisted coils of care, unclasps the troublesome grip of fear, unseats the rule of greed, and sets the spirit free to live, primarily and without restraint, for God.

(a) See how he limits his round of thought to dress and food. What do you think of this? Has he included within these two all essential grounds of care? Or was it his aim to mention those most fundamental? Or would he design these two to illustrate some numerous list of proper needs and likely cares? Is the force of his thought all the same, whatever way you answer these three questions? Bring your mind to answer this. It is essential, before you begin to teach with independent mind upon this theme.

(b) How general is the fault which Christ here assails? Are you likely to meet it nowadays?

(c) Study the form of his teaching. Is it Syrian, or local, or any way antique? Or is it as truly American, world-plain, and up-to-date? Can you separate form from substance here?

(d) What do you think of the teaching value of his use of birds and grass? Could you frame his argument, and leave them out? Where lies the logic of that "much more"? Is there any meaning in the fact that flowers and birds are incapable of anxiety? Upon what does the argument rest, their care-free nature or their lesser worth?

(**e**) Now draw out the actual thread of Jesus' argument. Can you frame it into a syllogism?

(**f**) He takes it for granted that God feeds the birds. Do you agree? If not, why not? Does your Father clothe the grass? Are your convictions here as clear and calm as Christ's? If not, can you hope to teach like him?

(**g**) What is Jesus' estimate of man, as uncovered here? Is his aim here to restrict, or to exalt our life? Look into that allusion to Solomon's attire. It was surely glorious. But it was eclipsed by the finer beauty of the swiftly fading fields. And we outrank the grass. Think carefully here. Just what is Jesus' thought? What is the grade of the human ideal which inspires and moulds his teaching art? What would he have us do with a sainted father's goods? How would he have a wealthy farmer live? Do not lazily refuse to think. Does your ideal of man have equal clearness, beauty and worth with Christ's? What bearing has this upon your teaching?

LESSON XI.

Meaning of a Meal with a Publican.

Luke 5 : 27-32.

1. Gather together all Gospel allusions to publicans. Define, as nearly as you can, their occupation. Form an idea of the sort of man most likely to get into such a line of work. Imagine the manners and methods of such officials, as they go about their duties. Think how their employment would react upon their character. Try and describe somewhat minutely a typical publican. He would be a cold, hard, shrewd, powerful, strong-willed, coin-loving deputy and domineer, versed in law, quick to scent evasion, well-practiced in a bitter role of rigid words. To the Jews, from whom he wrested funds, he would seem a despicable traitor and a soulless leach, draining the veins of Palestine to feed the strength of Rome. They stood for the righteousness of Roman rule; won honor out of Jewish shame; and rioted in their country's defeat. They were hence hotly despised, and barred from social standing among good and loyal Jews.

2. The Saviour's attitude. For the study of Jesus' position towards the publicans this lesson is a classic. It is a signal case of teaching by example. It is worth your choicest thought.

(a) He calls Matthew to the Apostolate. Ponder this well. A publican among the apostles! That simple, single fact, standing out in open sight, wherever Jesus led his train, though not a word of comment or explanation should leave the Master's lips, would publish a well-read volume of weighty truth. Here alone is a priceless hint for teachers. Think here of Jesus' unspoken thoughts. Honor this suggestion. Write out what you feel sure Jesus *meant.*

(b) Such a fact as Matthew's plain discipleship of Christ could not avoid grave sequels. Matthew would have his friends. Matthew would have his influence. The Master's word to him was a summons to be leader of a long-drawn file of his familiars. Jesus soon found himself adjudged a "friend of publicans." Think well of this. Think of it as Matthew felt it, and as it was hailed and cherished by his publican friends. Here is vital teaching vitally at work. Study to see its art. Search to find its power.

(c) See its most natural development, when Matthew makes a feast. Command some leisure here and do some studying. What would Matthew's primary motive be? Doubtless to honor Christ. But see that friendly motive work. It makes the feast stand thick with publicans. But scarcely anything could happen more certain to set the Saviour in reproach! Now study this. Study it from Matthew's point of view. Study it from the Saviour's. Study it as it would seem to those respectful publican guests. What has Jesus done? Most clear instruction is surely well afoot. But, state with good precision, just what does this wordless lesson *contain?* Can you tell? Will you?

(d) Follow up this last inquiry. Examine the Master here. He does not decline the feast. Of course not. He cannot. But what results? He merges in their life his full *identity*. Here is a matter you do well to ponder. Think of the meaning of an oriental feast. Think then of the Saviour's genuineness. Enter deeply into this. Where did Jesus place himself by this simple act? How would it be understood? What would all onlookers surely learn? Now see Jesus enter fully in, and nobly take his proper place in this glad, festal fellowship. With what profound appreciation of the meaning of his courtly act does he recline where Matthew leads, a courtly publican on either hand! Think of the quiet beauty of that act. Surely here is an open proclamation of the Saviour's mind. Now can you declare how fully this gracious deed voices all the burden of the Saviour's heart? Is this a fitting question right here? Can you fittingly decline to employ your nicest art to

fashion a deeply respectful reply? It may lead you closer than you think to the very marrow of the message, and the very genius of the teaching art of Christ.

3. But now, that criticism (v. 30). Look into it well. At exactly what does it strike?

(a) Be as precise as you wish. Note its very terms: "Why do you eat and drink with publicans and sinners?" Eating with men! Work into this. Can you name any human act more primarily human and everlastingly proper than this? Dismiss your other engagements and bide awhile just here. Jesus ate with publicans. On any ground, by any code, can you define any flavor of impropriety here? But to these scribes and pharisees there was some trespass of good decorum in Jesus' act. Now take their place and make accurate explanation of their offense. Keep strictly to Christ's act—eating with his fellow-men. The problem here may be more difficult than you think. But solve it. What ailed those pharisees? Do not frame your answer negligently. Be closely minute and fit your answer to the actual case—Jesus eating with his fellow-men. Many copartnerships with men are wrong. But eating with them—where is the fault in *that?*

(b) Those pharisees and scribes would have set the Master and those publicans decisively apart. They would have blocked his going in. All festal fellowship they would have denied. They would have built up impassable barricades and issued rigid rules of caste and class partition. Stated positively, this is their code. Now are you disposed to look down into this? Get in sight of their interior thought. Point out their social principles. It is worth your while. Put it this way: just what did Jesus override, when he broke bread with men called publicans? What issues on either side are here at stake?

(c) They overlooked Matthew's discipleship. Jesus called the man to follow him. What lay in that appeal? Matthew openly, instantly obeyed. What lay in that response? To this these critics paid no heed. That was a fatal, shameful oversight. Jesus was blameless and holy. Matthew, in admiring love, left all to follow him.

He was the Saviour's devotee. This feast was a princely token of his affectionate respect. Think for a little of the stupid rudeness of these scribes.

(d) Think somewhat similarly of their brutal heedlessness of the tender love of Christ in this onslaught on that feast. Their act was more uncivil than they knew.

4. Jesus' answer. (a) Note the figure—a physician. Did you ever try to see just what qualities, peculiar to a physician, belong to Christ? Look into this. Then look further. Wherein does Christ, as a physician, transcend all other members of that class?

(b) The sick. Were you ever "sick"? Can you sympathize just here like Christ? How deep and true and broad is his compassion? How broad is the word itself? Imagine a publican and a pharisee, both sick. What would be the difference—in the eye of the pharisee; in the eye of the publican; in the eye of Christ; in *fact?* How apt a *form* of answer is this? How adequate is it? But the allusion is of course to "sin." Put this word in each question above.

(c) Repentance. Here is a trenchant thrust. It points straight to wrong-doing. It probes towards conscience. It signals a prime duty. It invites towards righteousness. Frame a list of questions like those above with "repentance" in their midst.

5. Teaching hints.

(a) Bearing in mind the breadth of Christ's mercy, define the part that Matthew had in making Christ's message known. Wherein did he and Christ co-operate? Wherein did Matthew stand original and alone in publishing, by the fellowship of this feast, Christ's love?

(b) Name some of the special values of a feast, as a teaching aid.

(c) Think of Christ's teaching aims, when he chose Matthew. What could he do as teacher under Christ, that others could not do so well?

(d) Compute the difficulty of broadening a narrow man, of conciliating a prejudiced man, of humbling a lofty man, of winning to repentance a self-righteous man.

LESSON XII.

True Food for Immortals.

John 6 : 26-58.

1. The Case. (a) Make an orderly list of the events. Jesus had wrought the wonder of feeding the 5000 men with five loaves. They set out to make him king. Repulsed in this, they seek his presence and court his favor the following day. He upbraids them for blindness to the meaning of his work, accuses them of carnal greed, and counsels them to do the "work" of faith in him as the messenger of God (vv. 26-27). They ask him for a sign to prove his right to speak for God, a sign to match the manna Moses had (v. 30). When Christ denied to the manna any heavenly origin or the power of life, and proffered himself as life-giving bread from heaven, in one breath they called to be fed with such bread (v. 34); and in the next they fell to murmuring at his heavenly claim (v. 41), and prated about their full acquaintance with Joseph and his mother (v. 42). Then, when Jesus chided them, and cited the death of all the fathers, despite the manna (v. 49), and reavowed his heavenly origin, and roundly renewed the claim that his flesh was the very bread of life, the multitude, finding their stomachs still unfed, disowned his lead, and many of his disciples took offense and turned apostate (v. 66).

(b) Here are grievous errors. Can you list them? They missed the meaning of the miracle of the loaves. They blundered about the manna. They were stupidly dull to Jesus' hint about God's "work" (v. 29), and "this" bread (v. 34). They had no eye to see into his heavenly origin. They had only carnal views about his parentage. His talk about his "flesh" as food was to their intellects only an annoying puzzle. A hungry

stomach, a physical lineage, a palpable sign—here are the center and circuit of their lives. Around such a low arena their carnal notions jogged.

(**c**) Here is the Master's task. His thoughts were pure, spiritual, heavenly. He was trying to teach the deathless sons of God to cherish undying, undecaying things. And to accomplish this he was always proposing *himself*. In him the immortal spirit reigned supreme. In him was eternal life.

But these people were absolutely gross, unheavenly, unrefined. Their clamor was only for things they could forthwith see and feel and eat. Now what must Jesus do? This is no light question. Men are pitifully unheavenly. This is the rule. And in just this scene comes up the sharpest crisis in Jesus' life. It is at once an acute, and a representative case. Wise would-be teachers will scan his course.

2. Jesus' method. (**a**) He forces the issue. It could have been avoided. He might have fed that crowd again. This fact is pregnant. Study into the Master's wisdom. What was his theory of teaching, as shown by this? What was his aim? Do you see that this last is the primary question? Look into this.

(**b**) He makes the issue sharp at the start. Study v. 26. Do you commend this?

(**c**) He pointed to an inner meaning in that miracle of loaves. Study v. 26 again. "Not because ye saw signs"—what does this mean? Those people missed something. Will you digest this? It has big meaning for teachers.

(**d**) He reminds them that yesterday's bread was "perishing." You call this a homely commonplace. But wait. What brought that multitude a second day? Void stomachs. That was all. Will you linger here? By what motives are the multitudes moved? Do you care to term this a slight affair for teachers?

(**e**) He speaks of "meat" that "endureth" (v. 27). Do you feel the weight and point of this? It is the key and pivot of the whole discourse. It is the central burden of the Master's talk and work. And this chapter is a royal place to study it. It has infinite meaning

for all who teach for Christ. Was it wisely mentioned to *such* a crowd? This is a sovereign question. To slight it is to treat weightiest things as trivial.

(f) He bids them "work" for this "abiding" food. And when they blindly question what he means, he urges "faith" in him whom heaven sent. Will you balance those two words, "work" and "faith"? Do they mean alike? What do they mean? Read those verses (28-29) over and over. The "work," the "faith," the "sealed," the "sent," the "eternal life." They all converge in Christ. And in him the essential element is "life." And this "life" he sets in definite contrast with "perishing" food. "Life" in Christ, against "decaying" food. This is all. But could they comprehend that "life"? Can you? This is just the point. Do you really see it? There is nothing else in the whole chapter. Can you show it? If you can, you have gone far to comprehend all Jesus ever did or said. Here is something straight. Are you, as a teacher, ready to face it?

(g) Now the talk takes a momentous turn. It exactly fits those men. But for the thought of Christ the misfit is complete. They ask a "sign"; and to support their claim they cite the manna. If you know your day, here is something you will mark. Christ is handling invisible things. Rehearse them. He makes high claims. To win our "faith" in things like *that,* he should offer in evidence solid proof, something *open* to our outer eye, something like the manna Moses had. So these men retort. Now ponder this. It leads to the very pith and point of the whole stupendous debate.

(h) Jesus declines. Now watch his argument. First, he denies that the manna came from heaven (v. 32). Then, all who ate of it died (v. 49). It was itself a decaying thing. It had to be daily renewed. Hunger daily recurred. It and all who ate it have perished from the earth. Just so with the five loaves yesterday. All such food "perishes." It is not the bread of "life." *Such* perishing "signs" in such a perishing realm are not sufficient to embody evidence of the "eternal life" that wells in me. For *this* you need a different eye, a different sense, a different evidence.

(i) And then he proffers *himself* again (v. 32), and again (v. 35), and again (v. 40), and again (v. 44), and again (v. 48), and again (v. 51), and again (v. 54), as the imperishable food of imperishable souls, nourishing them to "eternal life." His "sign" is himself, the heaven-born, heaven-sealed, imperishable, life-giving and ultimate Saviour of the world. Will you take the honest pains to read these cited verses and all that intervenes, and make minutest mention of the Saviour's every form of speech? And then will you con them over and over, until you clearly see how fully they all agree in one? You could do no better work, if you really wish to worthily teach. Feel your way into his inmost wish. Then see how varied is his form of words. Thus mark the "what" and the "how" of his heavenly art.

3. Estimates.

(a) Define again the *nature* of this debate. What is up?

(b) Is this same discussion widely agog to-day? What are its themes and forms?

(c) Just what value have the miracles of the manna and the loaves?

(d) Define some evidence or "sign" of eternal life that will be complete? Was it accessible in that scene?

(e) Keeping in mind Jesus' inner thought, did that multitude, standing as they did in Jesus' immediate presence, have any advantage over us? Do you deem this question worth your while? Will you give it what you deem its due respect?

(f) Do you think it was *possible* to win those men to the Saviour's point of view?

(g) This marks a serious crisis in the Master's life. Christ being what he is, is such a scene avoidable?

(h) What teaching qualities are outstanding here? He adhered to things spiritual, eternal, heavenly. Do these three terms point out teaching traits? Do they point to *three?* Name others.

LESSON XIII.

Ethics and Etiquette: Which Holds Primacy?

Mark 7 : 1-23.

1. Study vv. 1-5. The case in hand is the Jewish habit of washing hands. This is a formality upon which they insist, before ever they eat. This custom is one of a large class. It has come down to them from their fathers as a traditional rule. This rule certain of Christ's followers ignored. This seemed to certain pharisees and scribes a reproachable neglect. They make the matter the subject of a complaint to Christ. This is the incident in particular. But it is typical. Gather from the Gospels other illustrations of strict formalism. Try to find their point of view. How do such formalities get to be habitual? Then how do they become so stringent? Try to enter into this. Such regnant customs have their grounds.

(a) Examine the relation of formality to tradition. This rule about washing hands came down to them from the "elders." It had authority. It bound. It had become a duty. It was a moral obligation. Neglect was an immorality. This was their point of view.

(b) Examine the outcome of this view of life. It supplanted true morality. Intent upon outer forms, it lost sight of inner qualities.

(c) It led up to a quarrel with Christ. They implicated him in blame. They did not shrink from challenging him by direct assault.

2. Now study vv. 6-8. Here stands Christ's first reply. Look closely to his interpretation of their view of life.

(a) He charges up hypocrisy. Study those words from Isaiah. It deals with *verbal* honor, and *absent* hearts in their attitude towards God. "Words" abound,

but the heart is not in them! And this, when addressing God! Here is a pungent retort. Why did he set in with such severity? What were they *at?* Do not dismiss this question. It leads near to the heart of the teaching art. Were his inquirers hypocrites? Was his answer apt?

(b) Now look again. Read vv. 7-8. His central thought is human rules. These people revere men's traditions. This manward habit of respect is so dominant that God's law is spurned and his worship becomes inane. Mark this. As the Lord goes on, he does not become more mild. His words are yet more trenchant and severe. Bring up again those questions asked above. Ask and answer every one.

(c) Now describe these pharisees as they stand reflected in the Lord's reply. They are wordy, heartless hypocrites, adoring God with empty phrase, abjuring his holy law, adhering instead with mimic reverence to hoary injunctions of men. This is bitterly cruel, if undeserved. Read the whole scene again. Who are these men? What are they designing to effect? Keep at this until your answer, in some sort, grows clear. In any case note two essential signs: They are making a drive at Christ; who are the men that would be apt to be up to the like of that? And the center of their concern is a matter of washing hands; what sort of men would be apt to be exercised about the like of that? Think well into this. Describe the *difference* between these men and Christ. They scan hands, cite human rules, and make light of God. He scans hearts, cites the divine law, and brings God to the front. Follow this out.

3. Now study vv. 9-13. Christ has set the battle. Now he drives it to the gates.

(a) He cites the law of God, that men should honor parents. Then he quotes their custom, which makes that ordinance null. Then he adds, "many such like things ye do." Now what is the Master's aim? Thus far he has scored hypocrisy and such respect for human rules as uncrowns the law of God, but citing no definite case. Now he brings in an illustration. But mark it narrowly.

It illustrates just *what?* Study it and frame a careful answer. It is worth your while. Then, having accurately fixed its *aim,* will you estimate its *force?* As an illustration, how powerfully does it *tell?* First mark its point. Then measure its power. In fact it is a most flagrant case of perversion of moral life. Children, by a trick of words, may impoverish their parents! This is one of their much revered "traditions." But however hoary or reverend, to any man of any filial sense, of any moral honesty, with any true respect for God, such a rule as that excites nothing but intense abhorrence. To such an issue Jesus leads their case.

(b) Now think. The discussion opened over unwashed hands. It closes over unfilial sons. Ponder this. How has this transition come about? Just *how?* Track the conversation through. Find its explanation. Detect its art. Where does its secret lie? Think again. Are those unclean hands and those unkind sons, after all, so far apart in this line of thought? Can you show how the former *leads* to the latter—in the thought of Christ? Try this. It may unlimber your teaching talent more than you suspect.

(c) And now think again. Those critics aimed to make a point. Has Jesus left or held *that* point? Have positions shifted? Their onslaught aimed at what? It has issued where?

And wherein lies the Saviour's mastery? Has he a nimbler skill? Or is his insight keener? Or is he more shrewd in dialectics? Or is it after all nothing other than undisguised straightforwardness? And as the issue clears, which party shows the truer moral sense? State, about as the critics would, the sum and force of their moral assumption, as they entered this little affray. Then state your own estimate of how those moral assumptions were bedraggled at the end.

(d) Think through this all again, to see how resistless the Saviour is. And observe where his power lay. It was all and wholly due to his pure, pristine, undampened moral sense. This made him quick. This made him strong. This made him keen.

4. Master, vv. 14-23. (a) Observe Christ's strenu-

ousness. He calls the throng up to him "again." Get a sense of his eagerness. Name other signs of it here. What does it mean? What value has it for a teacher?

(b) Mark that epigram in v. 15. It puts the whole contention in a nutshell. Do you see its two themes—physics and ethics? Do you really see this, as the Master saw it? It is really very homely. But that man who sees and feels and voices the sentiment that same homely epigram contains, as Jesus did, has attained to high and rare refinement in the art of teaching men. That simple verse is vast with meaning. Men are rigid with their rules as to how they *eat;* but they are reckless as to how they *talk.*

(c) But the very disciples failed to understand. Be wary here. But be plain. The best of teachers in their plainest statements may have to reiterate and explain. Few scenes are more illuminating than this for an honest teacher's open eye.

5. Teaching hints.

(a) Isaiah and Jesus faced cases closely alike. Is this an accident?

(b) Think what it means to be a hypocrite.

(c) Think what it means to put etiquette above ethics.

(d) Think of the possibility in the human heart for defilement.

(e) Think how obtuse a man can be.

(f) State precisely the bearing of all this on teaching.

LESSON XIV.

True Candidates for Majesty.

Matt. 18 : 1-6.

1. Get clear conception of the case. The disciples are peering into the kingdom, wondering whose power is to be pre-eminent. Observe: (**a**) The central place of the kingdom in their thoughts. Plainly Christ had made that theme eminent.

(**b**) Their idea of the nature of the kingdom. They had their eye on a set of external features. They were scanning through a system of gradations of rank.

(**c**) Their central motive was unworthily selfish. They were craving for evident dignity, majesty, authority over others.

(**d**) They still deferred to Christ. He did dominate their lives. Study all this closely to see what was astray in their thoughts or words—in ideal, in self-judgment, in judgment of others, in understanding of the nature of the kingdom. This is surely requisite to any true judgment of Christ's reply.

2. In response, the Master sets a little child among them. And over that little child he utters a few words that for pure originality, bright insight, and fine daring stand unparalleled. The teacher, who will explore their interior wealth and take notice of their incomparable art, is on the main path towards highest teaching skill. For a first step set each element well and clearly by itself.

(**a**) Men, adults, need reforming. They are perverted, and need turning back. And this distortion is not a trivial incident in their life. It is fatal. Except it be set straight, they cannot enter the kingdom at all (v. 3).

(**b**) Men can become as little children. Look at this

both ways. There is something normally manly in a child. There is something normally childlike in a man. Here is a deep look. Peer into it.

(c) This childlikeness in a man is in the normal man a radical trait. Therein inheres his fitness for the kingdom. That lacking, his unfitness for the kingdom is absolute.

(d) Having an eye to detect this heavenly quality in the normal child is primary evidence that one is a true disciple of Christ (v. 5).

(e) Within this normal child the primal excellence is humility (v. 4). Here is our key word. Study it. What does childlike humility show? A little child is naturally, essentially humble, modest, shy. He is by his nature, as a child, when the childlike has free and normal play, instantly and permanently and perfectly docile. He is essentially incomplete, immature, and so acquisitive and open to receive. He has an inherent proclivity to trust. He has a keen sense of majesty, wonder, high things. He has a beautiful, instinctive, spontaneous, model appreciation of things superior. He knows and illustrates ideally a healthy awe. All these are aspects of humility, charmingly native, graceful, and full grown in a little child. This central and far-working trait in children Christ commends, and that with impressive seriousness, to adults. Humility is a prime, main essential. It is a fundamental propriety. And its charm never fails. Should it ever vanish from any man, that man is unfit for the kingdom of heaven. Essentially and forever man is a child. Lowliness is a permanent, radical value.

(f) But see the other side. Mark the Saviour's unfailing balance. He who humbles himself, like a little child, that man is great in the kingdom of heaven. Note that word "great." How the Master arouses aspirations! Greatness is man's goal. Ambition is normal. High longings, when purged and guided right, shall be satisfied. Humanity has royal worth. Real majesty should be craved by all. Only seek it in real humility. Scan well the Saviour's jealousy here. Weigh every word in v. 6. These humble little ones may never be "offended." Read over the words of that doom: "Sunk"

in the "depth" of the "sea," by a "millstone," one that is "great," "hung" about his "neck." Here is something intense. It is awful. Get its force. But keep alert. Every syllable is keyed to the *value* of humble little ones. There is in every lowly man and in every normal child an infinite worth. They may even stand as valid representatives of Christ (v. 5). They may fittingly aspire to majestic heights. Thus it is only a false ambition that Jesus rebukes. A true ambition, the sort that flourishes so beautifully in every normal child, may have a healthy birth and splendid growth in every human life.

(**g**) This dignity is democratic. *Any* man may gain it. Mark and weigh and see the outlook of that word "whosoever" in v. 4. The dignities of the heavenly kingdom are not exclusive. Do some thinking here. As the disciples were arguing it out, they used a definite singular: "who" shall be "greatest"? In their scheme, there was room at the top for only *one*. As Christ framed his response, there is room at the top for *all*. "Whosoever" —walk round about that word.

3. Now search this lesson through, taking as a candle the title set at its head. Follow it up until you can formulate sharp estimates of Christ's teaching art.

(**a**) How significant a theme does this lesson present? Get a clear sense of its need and of its gravity. It handles eternal destinies. One *must* understand it, or fail of the kingdom.

(**b**) Look into those disciples. How unchildlike, how grasping, how misguided, how unfit for the kingdom, how untaught they were! How unapt men are to catch Christ's temper, and tone, and point of view! Think of this. Think of the meaning to a teacher of a pupil's proclivity to handle a great theme in a small way.

(**c**) Explore a little the mind of Christ here. Can you catch his feeling? Do you detect any access of strenuousness, any burst or energy of earnestness? Weigh that "millstone." There were two sizes: one turned by hand, and one worked by a mule. Christ chose the latter—a "great" millstone. Ponder this. Then his state of mind, as he drew in that little child—what were his feelings then, do you think? Then study

just here the main propensities of Christ's mind. He had a "little" child. Think of the meaning to a pupil of a teacher's proclivity to handle a little thing in a large way.

(**d**) State to yourself the value for good teaching of selecting an illustration from *life*—and then from *child* life. That is, try to construct this same lesson, omitting the child.

(**e**) Look into the composite character of Christ's answer. His answer was a child. But think how much a child includes. As an object of study, it is by no means simple. Christ offers it as an answer. But that answer it requires a Master to explain. At first thought, it all seems open and simple. But second thought shows that nothing could be more profound. And still, how perfectly adequate and apt, as an object lesson for those disciples!

(**f**) Reflect upon Christ's instantaneous, complete understanding of the whole problem, the instant he laid his hand upon that child. The whole truth flashed all its light at once upon his eye. What a mighty factor in a teacher's work!

(**g**) Appreciate how Christ *showed* the truth. He did not reply by a bald, dogmatic authority. He called into play upon their query their own connected thought. In a way he left it to them.

LESSON XV.

The Deeps of Forgiveness.

Matt. 18 : 21-35.

1. Peter's inquiry. One should review this whole chapter to see how Peter came to put this question to Christ. Read it all repeatedly. Keep asking questions, such as these: Was Peter seeking his own ease and peace, or his brother's good? Was he studying the value of forgiveness, or his own dignity? Was he largely generous, or largely jealous in his mood? Was his outlook towards self-denial, or towards self-defense? Had he been watchfully admiring the fullness of the mercy of Christ, or was he largely insensible to its wealth and grace? Was his inquiry the outgrowth of forbearance or resentment? Weigh his every word. That word "sin": "How often shall my brother sin against me?" How did that word leave his lips? Then that word "forgive": "and I forgive him." Ponder this. His eye is on his brother's sin, repeated sin; then it is on forgiveness, repeated forgiveness. Which term most likely held his heart most vigorously? Now study that phrase that follows—his own suggestion of a reply: "till seven times." Get his temper. Does the very wording and phrasing of his inquiry give any hint? Do you suppose that prospect of "forgiving" a brother's "sin" till "seven" times was any way engaging? Would it seem an irksome, or a welcome act? Does his question suggest eagerness or reluctance? What was Peter's drift? Where did Peter stand? What was Peter's need? Such questions are, from any teacher's point of view, beyond all doubt imperative. This point was no doubt sharply scanned by Christ. And he finished down his judgment to the sharpest edge, before he set out with any reply. Bungling here but poorly befits his followers.

2. Christ's first reply. He instantly raises Peter's estimate seventy-fold. This is violently abrupt. And its violence is evidently designed. But what does such excessiveness mean? Certainly this, that Peter's conjecture was widely astray. This the naked mathematics makes sun-clear. But the problem is not a case of numbers. The subject is forgiveness of a sin, a sin that keeps recurring. This is a grave affair. And in such a grave concern Peter's measurement went seventy degrees astray, and that by a geometrical rate. Now you do well to tarry right here for long and searching thought. Just where did Peter stand upon this theme? And where was the standing ground of Christ? In fact they stood a whole continent apart. But what, just what does this fact mean? It is precisely this that Jesus goes on to make clear. It is a choice example of how to teach.

3. The parable. (a) He imagines a debtor owing 60,000,000 shillings, with not a shilling to pay. The creditor, a king, issues a decree that the man, and his wife, and his children, and all he had be sold, that the account might be squared. Such was the debtor's plight, such was his distress. Jesus describes him as falling prostrate, begging for the mercy of delay, and pledging that every shilling shall be paid. In compassion the lord releases the man, and remits the debt in full and for good. Thus the Master fashions the case.

(b) Here is the place for a teacher to stop and ask sharp questions. Why did Christ devise an indebtedness so immense? Why did he paint the man so penniless? Why did he work in the peonage of all his house? These are all notoriously vigorous strokes. But they are all pure fancy. What was the Master at? Why did he project a case so serious, so extreme? He had a distinct design. Do you see it?

(c) Now follow the Master's further fancying. He conceives this man, just out of the grip of the direst distress, as himself a creditor in the paltry sum of 100 shillings. He paints him as unheedful of the cry for mercy, unbending in the vigor of his right, and all unpityingly thrusting his fellow debtor into jail.

(d) Now can you interpret this? What does it *mean?* Work it over and over. Expound this literally. Test this: The recipient of priceless mercy is himself an uncompassionate extortioner, pitiless as a Turk, wrenching from a broken life the uttermost penny of his claim. Unmeasured mercy had befriended him. He who obtained great mercy is not merciful. Now study into this. It is the very core of Christ's Gospel. Put it this way: Can forgiveness enter an unforgiving life? Is a merciless man fit to receive any mercy?

Then put it this way: Must a man have a real *share* in the forgiveness he receives. Think of that forgiven debt. In signing away his claim that kindly king signed away 60,000,000 of sterling coin. That act was to him at awful cost. But of this impressive sacrifice that pleading debtor had no sense. The priceless value of that royal clemency he utterly failed to sense. He knew not how to value it *in kind.* He was incompetent to understand what "forgiveness" meant. It was a process in which he had no share. This comes clear in two ways, as Jesus invents the case. He would not forgive his fellow debtor. And his own release was finally recalled. Now study. *Mercy costs.* In that cost both parties must feel a share. To be forgiven one must be forgiving. Only the merciful can obtain mercy. Pursue this. Can a man take benefit from moral sacrifice, and give its moral cost and pain no heed? Now turn it right about. If a man is deeply gracious himself, will he shrink from the prospect of showing grace to others? Does this hit Peter's case? And was just this the Saviour's aim?

(e) Now sum it up. The forgiven, being unforgiving, abides in guilt. The forgiving, being wronged, will freely and limitlessly forgive. Grace is gracious. Mercy is merciful. Peter really hated to forgive. Sensible of its obligation, he was trying to find its minimum bound. He hopes to find its obligation expire, at the outside, after seven times. And he seems to have no thought but that within that range his exercise of pardon may be faultlessly correct. Jesus' answer shows that mercy is deeply free, unlimited, unrestrained. For-

giveness is a work of mercy in which both parties share alike. Giver and receiver rejoice and suffer together. He who receives, sorrows and suffers with him who gives. He who gives, rejoices with him who receives. In forgiveness both cost and joy are deeply *mutual.* This is the Saviour's truth. And this is the Master's art.

4. Teaching hints.

(**a**) Christ's outrightness. Note Peter's mood. How cautious, and timid, and mincing his step! Contrast the ample generosity of Christ. He disdains all scantiness. Note the burst and stride of his speech. How manly it is, how straight-away. What an element in a teacher!

(**b**) Christ's fullness of grace. Peter's impulse to forgive was a faint and drooping plant. Christ's clemency was like a king.

(**c**) The gentleness of Christ's strength. There was in his words a lightning flash. And yet those words shine with all the mildness of a morning dawn.

(**d**) Christ's relentlessness. Peter's thought is tug ging for relief. But the Master's requisitions are literally *extreme.* Think of this.

(**e**) Christ's deep consistency. Peter's ideas about forgiving and being forgiven were apparently sadly out of accord. At least this was the case of the leading debtor in the parable. But Jesus sets the two experiences in absolute coincidence. A forgiving heart is the efflorescence of a forgiven life. How deeply do you conceive this to open into the genius of Jesus' teaching art?

LESSON XVI.

Handling a Shifty Lawyer.

Luke 10 : 25-37.

1. Do your best to understand this case.

(a) He comes inquiring, as though ignorant. But he answers each question, as though expert. Look into his profession. He was by training and practice an adept in the very line of his question. His standing was well defined, and his influence as teacher was most commanding. Study the Gospel allusions to "lawyers" and "scribes." Try to get a general sense of their attitude towards Christ. Try to discover why this attitude took just the form it did.

(b) Put together this man's form of approach to Christ, and his estimate of himself. He came "tempting" the Lord; and he was inclined to "justify" himself. See sharply how these two impulses were *related*. He came as though in the dark and seeking light. Christ made him answer his own question; and then declared his answer all-sufficient. Think of this. Do you think this lawyer was genuine? Did he seek for light? Plainly not. He knew passing well; and his reply came out instantly. And Christ's prompt approbation brought the conversation, of a sudden, to a full stop. Be definite here. This lawyer began by asking a question. The sequel shows that its true answer was *not* what he sought. What, then, was he after? Was he really shamming? Did he actually feel real respect for Christ? Was he hungry for truth? Do not dodge these questions. Locate this man. What is the meaning of v. 29? Christ's opinion of his own reply was clear and prompt: "This do and thou shalt live." What means that propensity to "justify" himself? Justify himself in *what?* Press your thoughts for an answer here. Had he been

unneighborly? Exactly why did that next question come to the surface? What sent it out? Something lay back of it. Push for that inner region. These questions are obviously makeshifts. There is some hidden animus. Find it out. Study the scene all through, having in your eye one only aim: to detect the spirit that was in this man. Help on your search by reviewing again all the Gospel allusions to lawyers. What was their type? Is this case one of that type? Keep at this. Plainly this man's queries were merely a disguise. It is equally plain that his disguise, when smitten with one honest glance from Christ, was all too thin. Now see how the Master handled him.

2. Christ's answer. (**a**) He drew him out of his ambush. He drove the lawyer to his law. He made it come clear that the inquirer knew quite enough to fashion his own reply. He made it stand painfully plain that this questioning scribe was more ready to teach than he was to pursue the way of life. This laid open in his life a sad and shameful flaw. Though spending all his strength upon the law of life, as a teacher, he was not respecting that law in his own behavior. He was merely mentally curious. He was not morally in earnest. If he would but "do" what he well knew, he would "live." But his knowing and doing fell apart. Hence he stood every day self-condemned. This moral cleft the Master made him lay open, as an awful blemish. Do not fail to see by how swift and deft a stroke this was done: "You seek the path to life; you are familiar with the law; how does it run? this do." "Do" what you already know.

(**b**) This ousted the man from his selected hiding-place. He stood out in the open sun. And it was his own word that so quickly uncovered his trick. He stood in most evident guilt of a false pretense, and that upon a most solemn concern. He must find some other subterfuge. And so he dodges nimbly into the old and tangled thicket of race prejudice, and intimates that he is unclear as to who his neighbor is. Beyond all denial this is nothing but a shift. Pursue it closely. We need to know our man before we can ever fitly teach. What

kind of a man is this? Two things are clear. He is insincere; and he is trying to save his skin.

3. The parable. Keep two things in mind: the man, his general type; and the question, its particular point. And keep in mind that this is a parable, a pure invention; and that it was fashioned in the Saviour's mind in an instant's flash. And mark some general traits. The field selected by Christ is not the sea or the farm, the flowers or the birds. He fashions his fancy from the experience of a man. Why was this?

And in this human scene, he invents, as the central feature, a case of suffering. Why was this? And he imagines the suffering as so extreme as to be all but fatal. Weigh each word. Why was this? And he conceives this last extremity of human pain and peril as being left by most excellent and good men in conscious, intentional and absolute neglect. Why was this? And finally he pictures a man, whom this Jewish lawyer would deem wholly wanting of good repute, as paying to the neglected and dying sufferer all humane attention, and this at distinct personal inconvenience and cost. Why was this? And there the Master leaves the matter, simply forcing the lawyer again to answer his own question. Why was this?

Here, now, are a few plain questions. Not one of them is vain, if you really covet insight into the art of teaching. They are not abstruse. They are not occult. They are concrete and obvious. They all *point straight* to the method and art of our Saviour's work. And they all point to one center. They guide unerringly in the direction of true neighborliness. This is the only point of the lawyer's inquiry. This is the only point of the Master's reply. This is the only point of your study, if you are in earnest. Every question helps to place it. Every question merits an honest reply.

4. **Special studies.**

(a) Think of the two main themes of this scene—eternal life and neighborliness. How did they ever come up in a conversation with Christ? Why *together?*

(b) In handling neighborliness, how likely are you to come upon suffering? Is there any hint here of a

good test of good teaching? Note that Christ volunteered this element. Why?

(**c**) Christ's teaching soon lands him in the work of *repair*. See how often in the Gospels he introduces this theme. How deeply does this theme strike into the heart of all his discussions?

(**d**) Do you note the presence of *sin* in this lesson? Where? How does it get introduced? Does its disclosure here show good teaching?

(**e**) Here are four things brought together: this lawyer's topic, eternal life; that citation of the sum of the O.T. law; Christ's mission; and this parable about the neighbor. Now can you show two things? First, how these four matters happen to get together? Trace out the genesis and development of this little scene. Show how each element *grew* in. Second, how those four things are related essentially. Do they really vitally cohere? In brief, is this lesson a unit? Where does its unity lie? How profound a matter is true neighborliness?

(**f**) Study this: Would the parable have had just as much point and force, if the benefactor had been a Jew, and the beneficiary had been wholly exempt from distress?

(**g**) Did Christ *teach* this lawyer anything? Did he *tell* him anything? Pause right here awhile. Just what did Christ accomplish? Just how did he do it?

(**h**) How did it happen that Christ could flash forth so instantly so finely polished an answer? Exactly what are the elements of the answer? What is there in it other than absolute sincerity and absolute good-will? Where then lay the secret of Christ's skill?

LESSON XVII.

The Full Truth Concerning Prayer.

Luke 11 : 1-13.

1. How this scene happened. Its immediate occasion was a vision, by the disciples, of Christ in the act of prayer. Something in that scene seems to have impressed one of his followers. It is noteworthy that the Lord's conduct seemed engaging. This disciple coveted the same freedom and power that Jesus showed. He wished to imitate his Lord. Another influence was the fact that John had taught his disciples to pray. Here is food for any teacher's thought. The disciples *seek* instruction. And this appeal is due to the Great Teacher's example. Christ's own prayer so impressed his follower that he plead to be taught its secret.

And think of John tutoring his disciples to pray. Think of his own experience, his capacity to treat its principles, his method of teaching. Let your fancy play. Imagine how Christ would enter upon prayer, how he would work his way through a prayer, how he would close a prayer. Imagine how firmly both John and Christ must have believed in prayer. Here are strong convictions, careful thought, and open example on the part of the teacher; and admiring attention, a cherished wish, and a voluntary appeal on the part of the pupil; and all concerning that solemn but vital mystery, prayer to the unseen God. Here is both milk for babes and meat for strong men, who covet the power to teach.

2. The form of prayer (vv. 2-4). (a) See how the Master's reply starts out: not by an argument, but by a model. Mark his themes. They are the main thing. Weigh and compass each one. God's kingdom: the coming and culmination of his sovereign work of judgment and grace. Man's bodily need: the plea for a daily

grant of daily food. Sin: a call for pardon, enforced by an avowal of a personal sense of its cost and worth. Temptation: a petition to be spared the peril of its assault. A Father: a reverent embodiment of a filial feeling of trust and love.

(b) Bring to the front the great values engrossed in this prayer. The moral: Abhorrence of sin, sense of proneness to sin, experience of wrong inflicted by others, exercise of the wonder of pardon, craving for grace. Here lies open all the range of the moral realm. The physical: How essential! How suggestive of waste and change each day! The religious: The sense of God's fatherhood, and transcendence. Get a clear sense of their deep diversity, their boundless range, their full unison. The social: Look into the hints of fellowship with others in dependence and praise, in sin and grace.

(c) Think all this over and over, as a body of truth. Think of the process of selecting and assembling it in the Master's mind. Think of his sweep and search of thought. Think of his comprehension of human need, human peril, human lapse, human hunger, human peace. Think of his insight into God. Think of the balance of his thought. Think of all these and other things as hints of the Saviour's full readiness for such a request. He was a man of prayer. He was a man of thought. In such a theme he was at home. Such readiness for such a theme—what a study for teachers!

3. The case of a man in need, and his friend in bed (vv. 5-8). Read this over and over, till you exactly find the Master's *aim*. Then read it over and over, till you appreciate his *art*.

(a) Look into that need, as Jesus painted it. It affects a host. It is a lack of bread. It is deep in the night. It involves a guest. Study this. It is all pure imagination. But every phrase is a flash from Christ.

(b) Follow the course of getting a supply. It was secured from a "friend." It came despite irksome inconvenience. The decisive motive was shame. It was an answer to a prayer. Scan each feature here, too. Every stroke is free invention; but it is the invention of a fertile, lively mind.

(c) Now get it all before your mind. This whole case is nothing but a supposition. Why did Jesus suppose *such* a case? Why did he pick that relation of "host" and "guest"? Why did he paint the host with "nothing"? Why did he conceive the host as seeking a "friend"? And why, especially, did he insert that element of "shame"? Now, look all these features over. Where does the accent lie? Bring the case to some point. Is it hospitality, or friendship, or emergency of need, or urgency of prayer? Just what is the meaning of that word "shame"? Does it point to the pride of the host, or the hunger of the guest, or the duty of a friend? Work this through. Christ has supposed a case where a prayer and its answer are the outcome of an insufferable extremity. No guest may go unfed. *That* were a disgrace. Such a situation compels a prayer. Such a prayer compels an answer.

(d) Now keep strictly to this supposed case. Be sure you know just what you are doing. Bring out again each element: the host, the guest, the hunger, the friend, the plea, the inconvenience, the shame, the bread. Out of all these, omitting no one, construct a sentence showing the propriety and the power of prayer. Fashion it so that a prayer will be unavoidable; so that its force will be irresistible; so that its denial will be inconceivable. Keep at this until you see the point and force of Christ's thought.

(e) But do not forget that the entire situation is an invention. It was an absolute and free creation of Christ's thought. Why did he give it just that form? Try to recast it all, eliminating completely that element of "shame." Wherein will your case and this one differ in their teaching touching prayer? Then take out entirely the "guest." Would the case be equally urgent? Then cut out all trace of *need*. Then would prayer be just as fit and strong? Pursue this. Search out the very point and the exquisite art of these brief phrases from the Great Teacher's lips.

4. Now enter vv. 9-13. Here it is not "host" and "guest" and "friend"; but "father" and "son." But observe the "bread" again.

(a) Put together these three factors: father, son, and bread. Out of these three primary human realities Christ weaves an argument for prayer. As illustrated here, prayer is vital, normal, valid, and efficient. It is woven out of strongest, tenderest human ties. Do not drop this clue. Pursue it.

(b) But above all things mark that phrase "how much rather." This is vital to understand. It intimates that all thus far said is only an introduction. It is a distant approach. Earthly friends and fathers are bound to hear, and sure to honor exigent appeals. But at the very best (mark this) their responses are sluggish and prone to be misled. With them are weariness and mistakes. Still they will surely answer such requests. But your heavenly Father never wearies and never errs. Any cry out of any need for any good he will surely heed. By as much as his love and truth and strength transcend all earthly fathers' and friends', by so much will his proffer of all good in answer to all prayer be more sure.

(c) Now note the agreement of it all. Hold together before your eye his own act of prayer, his form of prayer, these two illustrations, and that central appeal of his in v. 9. Study deeply into them all. Do they all agree? Here is your chance to test the full perfection of the Master's art.

5. Teaching hints.

(a) Study the relation of teaching to experience. Is it likely that Jesus ever lay through a night unfed?

(b) Could a truer or more ultimate analogy be named for the study of prayer than a son's request of his father for bread? Christ was deeply thoughtful.

(c) Examine minutely this method of teaching by analogy.

(d) Study the value of making your teaching irresistible.

(e) Find the roots of Christ's strength. They lay in his complete familiarity with the very nature of God and the very nature of men.

(f) Which has the greater teaching value—the genuineness of Christ's piety or the profundity of his thought?

LESSON XVIII.

When Pupils Lie in Ambush.

Luke 14 : 1-6.

1. Here is another scene with critics. Jesus was at a feast. The host was a ruler from among the pharisees. The guests were probably the host's familiars, who would sympathize with him in a technical, legalistic view of life. It was a Sabbath day, a period beset all around with scruples and statutory rules. Here is call again for the play of your imagination. Give it some liberty. Make use of it.

(a) Try and conceive how Christ figured there. His very presence shows that he had command of some measure of their respect. They did him the honor to give him a place at their feast. This reaches back into some anterior observation and study of Christ, on their part. Let your mind run out into this. Fancy how Christ won their heed. But scan this scene. Christ was being "watched." Think of him under that constant scrutiny. They were all the time gathering, he was all the time giving points. And Jesus was conscious and wary. Note that "answer" in v. 3. He had his eyes open to their every nod and wink. Think of this. Imagine Christ caught napping! And he moved straight forward in his work. He did not idle or delay or postpone. He knew that their hearts were unfriendly. He knew that he was about to give offense. Think of this unvarying straightforwardness in Christ's deeds. He always paid his mission full respect. Some phase of it was shining everywhere. No phase of it needed hiding anywhere. He never dallied or trifled or entered into truce with enemies. He always stood erect. He always faced his work. Here are fertile hints for teachers.

(b) Study those fellow guests. They merely

"watched." They leveled all their eyes for some flaw. Even when Jesus squarely challenged them, not a man but was so unfair and rude as to decline all reply. Their silence came near to being glum. They asked nothing, answered nothing, offered nothing, did nothing. Study them. Describe them. Test these following words: They were cold, zealous, biased, resolute, cruel, cowardly, crafty, blind, subtle, studious, formal, envious, set, keen. Which of those terms are inaccurate or unfair or superfluous? But get in earnest. *Study* these men.

(c) Now try to explain to yourself how this condition arose. How is it, when Christ is so frank, that his fellow feasters are so sly; when he is so genial, they are so sour; when he is so undisguised, they are so suspicious? Christ was the light of the world. Why must they play the spy? Study into this. Find its roots. Doubtless Jesus did. As those people sat there feasting, they should have had with Christ unhindered and happy fellowship. What was the obstacle? Study that list of adjectives above again. Which one indicates the heart of this unfriendliness? Was it their dullness, or their envy, or their Sabbath legalism? Track this down. Carve out some answer. It is, for wise teaching, a first necessity. At what point will Jesus most wisely level his next word or deed?

2. Now study the Master's work. He is aware of their Sabbath rules. He projects before their eye a man sick with the dropsy, and an ox in a pit. He heals the dropsy, consciously assailing their Sabbath scruples, and transgressing their Sabbath rules. And then he demands of any one of them to say, if he would not on the Sabbath day do any labor needful for the relief of his ox.

(a) See if you can construct out of this deed upon the dropsy and that word about the ox Christ's idea of the root fault in those spies. They would neglect the man, but respect the ox. And they would do this out of esteem for the Sabbath. Look. Here are religious formalism, property greed, and inhumanity, these three. Christ's procedure deals a ringing blow at every one. Now answer. How did Jesus interpret and understand

the case? Then answer again. Was his view correct? And then answer once more. His diagnosis being right, was his treatment wise? Would you think and act similarly? Be careful here. What was the sum of Christ's answer? At its sharpest point it was human kindness. He felt compassion for human suffering. The sharp thrust of this plain point was the whole force of his response. That pointed act rebuked the reign of legalism and greed, and made human sympathy free and sovereign in the midst of the human heart. Now look keenly after the accuracy of this. Study it over and over, through and through, in and out, looking in turn at the sick man, the ox, the spies, the Sabbath code, the mind of Christ. Did Christ's blow hit home?

(b) But watch the class he was teaching—those fellow guests. Mark their attitude. They are hard and rigid and fixed. They are not fair. They are morally stolid. They are beyond any teacher's reach. They hate the truth. They love the ox more than the invalid man. They cherish Sabbath primness above human joy. Compassion is stifled. Keen and spry towards money gain and money loss, they are dull and faint towards human hurt and human cheer. They are ardent towards things, frigid towards men.

(c) With all their indocility in your mind, study Jesus again. Note every quality of his work. He keeps to his own pattern. Explore the inner value of that act of healing. It is a beautiful display of kindliness and skill. Before such a company, and in the intent of Christ what did that healing mean? It carried up to the very portals of their eyes a mighty lesson. Find it out. Then get the measure of his boldness. He knows he is trampling some of their choicest prejudices beneath his feet. But he walks straight on. He doesn't flinch an instant, or swerve an inch. But study him just here. He is not wanton or rude. He is strong and firm; but it is only mercy; only pure, benignant grace. Still he is sharp. His words are as a knife. They cut to the nerve. And he is true. He exactly indicates their fault. And he makes it glare. And he is strong. They cannot reply. Here is a place to meditate. Learn the

art. Think intently upon this plain and quiet illustration of your Master's method. Here is teacher-training. Here is normal work. Here is pedagogy, plain and pure.

3. Studies in combination.

(**a**) Try to turn upon those pharisees, in one flash, all the light of this lesson. It is not easy; but it will pay. As they came in and took their places in the presence of the Lord, they were wary and ardent, but mute—the silence of the spy. As the little conference ends, they are still mute, but dogged and dumb—the silence of the convict and the dolt. Keep scanning them. Get your picture vivid.

(**b**) Try to blend the traits of Christ, as a teacher. His mildness, insight, force—and all so spiritual and free and pure. Work at this. You face a radiant soul.

(**c**) Make a place for the joy and song of the sick man healed. In fact his presence fixes the center of the scene. Show how every thought and act articulate here.

LESSON XIX.

When Pupils Push for Primacy.

Luke 14 : 7-14.

1. The situation. It is a feast, the same scene as in the last lesson. The feature that now gets Christ's attention is the carefulness among the guests to select, each for himself, the honorable seats. Here are two matters for thought; the fellowship of the feast; and the strife for the first places.

(a) What is a feast? What does it *mean?* Why are they provided? Why are they so popular? Look into this. Imagine the Saviour's sentiments and engagements at a feast. Fancy his motives in going. What would be his spirit and manner in such a place? Try and imagine what features would please him; and at what behavior he would be grieved. Keep at this. What is a feast? Name the essentials. Surely they are two: food and fellowship. Now put some thought upon those two things. Think of food. Think of the nature of it, the need of it, the relish of it, the nurture by it. Then think of the fellowship, its freedom, its equality, its mutual respect, its partnership. And now mark narrowly how every one of these features of a feasting company of men point inevitably and unerringly to what is *common.* They share them all together. It is of the very essence of the very nature of a "feast" that all who gather there should share *alike.*

(b) But now study that push for primacy. Analyze it. It is an ugly factor in any feast. See what it does. It exiles instantly all full companionship. Divisions are traced out sharply. Fellow feasters fall apart. Grades and ranks are set conspicuous. Emphasis is put on differences. The dignitaries swell. Inferiors dwindle. Distinctions stare everywhere. And this at a "feast!"

As though men's tongues and palates differed! And as though division helped on unison!

(c) And now watch the workings. Distinctions at a feast! Look into this. See what emerges, when fellow feasters fall to fixing grades. These new and most ungainly arrivals will have to be given room: hypocrisy, arrogance, self-consciousness, swelling, scorn, aloofness, contempt—this on one side; and resentment, bitterness, dissent, anger, hate, sham phrases, false manners, empty praise, adulation, envy, jealousy, discouragement, backbiting. More or less of these ill-mannered guests will surely enter and sit through any graded feast; and they will as surely sully the face of its finest joy. Such distinctions are cruel. They are a biting affront. They kindle anger. They smite love in the very eye. And they are untrue. They give currency to counterfeits. Sterling coin they retire. They are gross. They rate things above persons. Jewels outshine virtues.

And they are intolerably arrogant. They usurp the place of God. They assume the right to judge and fix man's worth and lot.

Such is the issue of the push for primacy at a feast. It corrodes character, and it banishes fellowship. Such is the nature of the situation. Do you agree?

2. Christ's teaching.

(a) Observe that he handles the matter directly. He inserts no analogy. And he fastens upon some one individual; note the singular "thou." Probably he faced and addressed some person in particular. He narrowed his remarks down to three men: the ambitious guest, some worthier guest, the host. He admonished of possible humiliation. He made the issue turn on worth. He advises lowliness. He pictures the honor of advancement by the favor of the host, and the deep joy of its approbation by all the guests. And finally he publishes a general law touching honor.

(b) This teaching, set in the heart of a feast, merits your thought. It really embodies a philosophy. It sets in glaring contrast two traits: an ungracious self-esteem, and a kind-hearted lowliness. One prefers himself before all others; the other prefers all others before him-

self. Both are imagined seated in the highest place: one by his own sole vote and preference; the other by the invitation of the host and the unanimous welcome of the fellow guests. Get into this. Study the two foundations. See how scant and slender the support of the one. His dignity is based only on his own view, and his own sole vote. See how broad and sure the ground which the other holds. He has shown good-will to all, referring all preference to them. This touches every man, and they in turn give cheerful preference to him. The man who disdains and denies the worth of all his fellows will find them all denying him congratulations and respect. The man who honestly seeks to enhance the honor of all will find his own worth acknowledged by all. The lowliest are the worthiest. The haughtiest are the emptiest. Cruel haste for primacy is sure to end in shame. Gentle heed of all one's fellow guests is sure of supreme respect. All this is in the Master's simple words. Do you doubt it? Then weigh again that word "chose" in v. 7, noting that it is the act of the guest; and that phrase "glory in the presence of all" in v. 10; and Christ's view of the inner quality of the man who voluntarily and genuinely "takes" the "lowest place" v. 10. There is a profound wisdom hidden in those words. Be diligent till you surely find it.

(c) But see how deftly it is done. It is all so concrete. You can see the swollen dignity collapse. You can feel the warm approval, as the guests do deference to the exemplar of a lowly, kindly love. And it is so quickly done. His words are few. But the task stands complete. And it is so wisely subtle. There is no self-placed dignitary but has the uneasy fear that his precious dignity may any moment be outranked. This lurking fear Christ vigorously goads. And it is all so strong. These eager guests picked their seats themselves. Each seems to deem his estimate and preference supreme. But the Master more than hints at the peril and foolhardiness of overriding their host. And then his words are so surcharged with *character*. Be sure you do not ignore or undervalue this. This peril is most subtle. It lurks at every turn. Test it in v. 10. Are you sure

your estimate of the man, who volunteers to take the lowest seat, agrees with Christ's? Follow this up. Do scenes like this affect you as this scene affected the Lord? Do you deeply believe v. 11?

And observe that this teaching is spontaneous. It came *unasked.* Suppose Christ had postponed these words until they were desired. Are men likely to seek or welcome such advice?

3. Now read vv. 12-14. Here the Master accosts the host. Can you show that the principle here is identically the same with his counsel to the guest? It surely is. Are you able to work it out? This deserves your respect. It will help you to find the relation of substance and form in your teaching work. Here is the sum of the whole. Host and guest alike must show a strong and full good-will. Their neighborly kindliness must be absolutely unhandicapped, uncalculating, unselfish and free. Then desert will attain to dignity, and dignity will be deserved, and this by the happy consent of all. Do you agree?

4. Special studies.

(**a**) How prone are men to duplicate this scene? Make a study here, in the presence of Christ, of a Christian teacher's opportunity, duty, and task.

(**b**) Christ points to honor. Note his word, "glory." Do you suppose this goal lures you to your work as it lured your Lord?

(**c**) See how Christ makes reference to the presence and judgment of the crowd. Take the measure here of those two words, "shame" (v. 9), "glory" (v. 10). Do you sense how he *uses* this?

(**d**) Do not overlook the Saviour's mention here of "the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind." What impulses were working here? Are they essential in any teacher following Christ?

LESSON XX.

The Distasteful Bliss.

Luke 14 : 15-24.

1. The situation. The feast of the last two lessons is still spread. Keep in mind those silent spies, those first seats, that thrifty host. But out of it all bring now to the front those allusions to "blessedness," "recompense," and the "resurrection of the just," in v. 14. Here are three engaging themes, all pointing to a happy future. Instantly some feaster prates about the shining felicity of that future state, more than intimating his own assurance of abundant entrance into the kingdom of God. Here you ought to pause. Survey this company again. Recall the last two lessons. And note that in the words now rising towards Jesus' lips there is embedded a smarting rebuke. There is crying need of teaching still. The Master is still at table with a crowd of unheavenly pharisees. Review it all. That biting query about the dropsy still awaits reply. Arrogance and pride still grip the uppermost seats. The subtle host is still dressing his plumes. Think right into this. Do you deem that the host forbore to forecast his manifold reward; or that the upper rank had really welcomed the lowest seats; or that the confounded spies conceded their defeat? Beyond all doubt deceit and greed and cold-heartedness on the part of the spies, hot thirst for preference among the guests, and strict reckoning of every platter and sofa provided by the host, were flourishing throughout that banqueting-hall in vigorous growth. And the men who relish such unsavory things esteem themselves to have and hold widest *entrée* into heavenly feasts and keenest appetite for heavenly bliss. This ugly anomaly Jesus had to face. Make sure whether this analysis is right.

2. Christ's treatment. He instantly invents and ushers

in a goodly parable. It is a princely example of teaching skill. Sit one side and watch its pageant pass.

(a) It is accoutered from the Orient. Catch every aspect as it moves along. The host, his lordliness; the hall, its amplitude; the banquet, its munificence; the invitations to the guests, their multitude; the servant, his busy diligence; the final readiness, its full and fair display; and in it all the thoughtful heed for happiness, the grand attractiveness of the whole. Give your imagination play. Think of the grace and charm and practiced skill of eastern hospitality. It embodied the prime delight, the chief desire, the perfect refuge, and the choicest honor of oriental life. Make sure this beautiful scene is fully spread before your eye. Master so far the Saviour's art.

(b) But now, a marvel! When every place is ready, and all the bounty is complete, and doors are all flung open to the guests, and all are called to come—every man declines! Now sit quietly down and think. Think of the East. Think of their feasts. Think of the host. Think of the servants. Then fancy such behavior from guests. It is amazing, amazingly rude, amazingly strange. What was in Jesus' thought? Watch him. He points a steady finger, and holds a steady eye. Get his aim. He is in the midst of a well-nigh matchless teaching scene.

(c) It all stands open, in one way, in the following words from the invited men: "I am buying a field; I am testing a team; I have wedded a wife; I cannot come; I beg release." Here is the inmost core of Jesus' thought. Burrow to its heart. These men are *already satisfied*. They are preoccupied, well-filled with present employment and present content. Their days and thoughts and hearts are full. The spice and zest of life are already theirs. They know no hunger. This stands clear. But what does it *mean?* Ponder this. Do not let it drop for days. And know what you are pondering. This is not the *end* of the Master's thought. It is only a *means*. It is a parable. It is a royal illustration of a royal Teacher's ingenuity. Are you really ready to study it?

(d) All explanation roots in those former paragraphs. Review those lessons with both your eyes and all your heart intent. Note how in them Christ urges the culture of frankness, pity, humility and uncalculating love. Weigh over and over those ponderous words. Every one is burdened with eternal value. Do you admit this? Set each term in the presence of those hints of reward and blessedness and a resurrection. They are the very and only qualities fitting for that future bliss. Get this sun-clear. But for all those qualities these feasters have no taste. They love formality, primacy and generous recompense. They insist upon gradation, and generate ill-will. These are the things they love. When a banquet of heavenly charity, sincerity, humility and purity is openly proposed, they spurn the feast. Just here, look back. Review and rehearse it all again. *What* is Christ trying to do? *How* is he trying to do it? Is he doing it well? Persist in studying this. It is a close pursuit of a most discerning guide. It is high, fine art.

(e) But now master what the Saviour adds. And mind your eye. The parable takes a mighty turn. But its aim is just the same. It doesn't vary by a hair. But it is a parable. Get all this clear. It is a prime essential in gaining a teacher's skill. The generous host becomes indignant. He cuts every rejecter off. Not one shall have a taste. But his food shall not go stale. He proffers all its wealth to the stricken poor. None of his labor shall go for nought. For every portion there shall be a joyful guest. And all who come shall shout and sing and thrill with high, care-free festivity. Now do you see the very point? And does it seem to you to shine? And do you see that it is surpassingly finished and sharp? The "poor" are *hungry*. The "maimed" are vexed with wondering *unrest*. Of bliss and bounty there is in their lean and broken lot a pitiful *lack*. Open to *them* a beautiful, bountiful hall, and how pathetically instant and thankful their response! But still, this is all a parable. Do not err so fatally as to admire its beauty, and miss its point. For whom do those lame and hungry, eager people stand? Never

for the self-satisfied and well-content. Never for any who contemn free grace. Never for any who deny that they are forlorn and in desperate need. Follow this up.

(f) Now unify the whole. Restate the situation. Rehearse the parable. Uncover its *point*. Is this the sum? Not the proud and fat and unpitying heart, but the faint and lean and broken soul will hail the moral equity and dignity and bliss brought in at the resurrection of the just. Or this? Not for souls in present plenty, but for souls in present distress has the bliss of heaven any charm. Or this? Not the haughty, heartless, unrepentant hypocrite; but the open, tender, humble heart will enjoy the festal fellowship of Christ.

3. Teaching hints.

(a) Mark Christ's appreciation. Everything is familiar.

(b) Measure his vigor. See if you detect all its signs. He is intense.

(c) Note his aptness. He was at a feast. He spoke of a feast.

(d) See how explicit he is—almost abruptly so. In the parable, as a parable, nothing is vague.

(e) See how self-evident the parable is. Keep within the parable and all men will judge it alike.

(f) See how he leaves his parable unexplained. But note how irresistibly it pushes every hearer to an explanation.

LESSON XXI.

Eating with Outcasts.

Luke 15.

1. The occasion of this lesson was a general movement of publicans and sinners towards Christ. Note that word "all" in v. 1. Think of the *sweep* of the Lord's power. Note that phrase "drawing near." Think of the *nature* of the Lord's power. It was attraction. Among men Christ's influence is centripetal. He engenders a feeling for fellowship. Think of the *field* of the Lord's power. It was among sinners and publicans—men deemed outcasts, men whom cultured people spurn.

(a) Try to make this real to your mind. Think of Christ's tone and style and theme; his voice and eye and hand; his grief and joy and zeal; his direct and gentle address; his warm and genial friendliness; his strong and deep compassions; his healthy mingling of abhorrence and affection for men in sin; his instant sympathy with the contrite; his genuine and easy companionship with the lowly and despised; his hot resentment of haughtiness and all abuse; his gracious and winsome overtures from God; his plain and faithful mention of impending wrath; his splendid manliness, so honest, reverential, kind and pure; and all so noble, faithful, spiritual and strong. Get all this in motion before your eye. Conceive it working freely among those outcast men. They had noted all his grace and excellence; and the glory of it had aroused and set erect all the inert manliness in men whose daily portion among their fellowmen had been unfriendliness and cold contempt. And the outcome was a joyful round of friendly feasts. The humane and heavenly Lord, and the sin-stained outcasts of his day were socially at one. This caused offense. The proud and well-trained sticklers for traditions and

forms, the cultured aristocrats of the day grumbled. And they kept it up. For every succeeding happy feast they felt a heightened resentment and discontent.

(**b**) Study searchingly into this. Study till your heart begins to burn. Make the contrasts wide. Get the edges sharp. Do not mince. Here if anywhere Jesus was uncompromising and plain. Get clear and positive like him. Get clear, and be honest, and speak it out. Jesus abominates class arrogance. He never spares self-righteousness. He cherishes nestling penitence. He always bastes a pharisee. He always comforts lowliness. Behold him in this chapter. It is a famous landscape. And Jesus is as a rising sun—all aglow with zeal, all agleam with grace. But these spleeny pharisees despise his grace. Now observe his zeal. Jesus is to defend his grace. Here is the chapter where the Master's teaching art stands in the majesty and light of a high noon.

2. The Saviour's answer. His reply and rebuff are threefold. He fashions on the spot three parables. Each parable of the three contains three themes: a loss, a sorrow, a joy. Now it all revolves about a coin, now a sheep, now a son. All three are lost, all three are mourned, all three are found.

(**a**) Note the *loss*. The coin is gone; its value is annulled. The sheep is astray; it has no worth. The son is profligate; his manliness is all laid waste. This note is fundamental. Make sure its resonance is full. But what does Jesus mean by that word "lost"? Would he and the pharisees agree? In some sort, yes. He would agree with them, they would agree with him that precious value had gone to waste. But would they agree with Christ in his mighty sense of the preciousness of that vanished thing? Think here.

(**b**) Feel his *grief*. The coin, the sheep, the son had worth, even when at waste. Here you need to have deep fellowship with Christ. For those pharisees, no open harlot or hateful publican had any worth. But Christ had vivid sense of value there, though sadly gone to wreck. No evil, sodden life but would stir in him a piercing, ceaseless, heavy pain. Get a sense of this. It

is the very genius of his art. It is the key to all he says and thinks. It is the spring of all these parables. For every wasted, outcast life he feels real love and pride. Hence each parable. This, precisely *this* taught him all this skill. But for that deep, full mingling of pride and love and pain, Jesus had been a pharisee. These parables would never have been conceived. Get hold of this. Here coils the mainspring of your Master's teaching skill. He loved the publican. He prized the harlot. In every human wreck he detected treasure store of human worth. *Hence* those matchless parables. The coin was *worth* the candle. The sheep was *worth* the search. The son was *worth* the fatted calf. *Hence* those feasts. Hence this grand defense. Hence his teaching skill. It is simply the rebound of his deep, true love. Con it over and over. Get your Saviour's sense of the worth of what was lost. That coin was sterling. That sheep was life's support, the shepherd's pride. That son was the offspring and girdle of his father's loins. The worth of unworthy men—this is his theme.

(c) Now catch his note of *joy*. See it work its utterance out in fellowship. The woman tells her friends. The shepherd calls in neighbors. The father makes festal jubilee. And all for joy. But note. Just this festal happiness stirred all that grumbling. Now are you sure you find the burnished point of it all? It is sharply, simply this: Is every man worth saving? Is every one worth visiting? Then get quickly at it. And soon deep hearts will flow together. And the crest of human happiness will be reached. The harlot will turn pure. The publican will grow true and kind. Estranged hearts will be reconciled. Then there will be high joy in heaven, and precious festal foretastes here on earth. What a glowing theme! And what shining art!

(d) But all is keyed to *grace*. Every parable is but an ample and inviting highway to the beautiful gateway of penitence. Do not fail to see and go where the Master of heavenly mercy leads. His only aim in entering those feasts is to lure every feaster to a better life. He mourns their shame. They must reform. He loathes

their dark wrong. They must reform. Watch his handling of the prodigal son. It is all pure fancy. See him paint in that deep rich glow of filial love as the prodigal returns. To all eternity that beautiful hue will never fade. And as an answer to those grumblers, its finished art is absolute. Tarry here. That picture of the returning prodigal, as a model of teaching skill, will never have a peer. It is the Master Teacher's masterpiece. As a warrant for those feasts with harlots it is impregnable. As an answer to those pharisees it is irresistible. As a banner to hang forever above his form its living texture is imperishable. Now struggle for your life to feel Christ's art, and to find its source. What was the *secret* of his skill? It was his zeal to save. He carried infinite store of sacrificial love. He burned with zeal for righteousness. He loathed every shade of sin. Hence all his popularity among those shadowed lives. Hence all his skill in framing parables.

3. Special studies.

(**a**) Walk about his answer. See its *fullness;* he flashes out in three replies. He weaves three tapestries, with figures totally unlike. See its unity; the three are one. Each aids the other two to drive one lesson home. See its victory: no man can fashion a living reply. Try it. See its finality: no man has ever added a word. Try it. See its beauty: every figure is a gem.

(**b**) See his strong wisdom. He points to the currency, the herd, the home. He probes into all the deep interiors of human life. And nothing is of transient worth. He grasps and stirs the main instincts of man. He knows and he uses what is in man.

(**c**) See how his answer leaves his critics. Describe them in the light of this reply.

(**d**) But his appeal must fail. But it is unanswerable. What do you say?

LESSON XXII.

Luxury vs. Charity: A Life Choice.

Mark 10 : 17-22.

1. The youth. He was eager, courteous, open, influential, moral, attractive, wealthy, uncontent, selfish, miserly, unspiritual, unchristlike. Here is a study worth any man's time. Test each adjective above searchingly. Then think: Why was he in unrest? Why did he come hasting to Christ with such a query? This, too, needs answering. Something was disturbing, driving him. Something was impressing, attracting him. Do you think there was in him any inward dishonesty with himself? Or can you name any unconscious error in which he was probably wandering? Probe carefully here. Where was his nature's center? He had a hoard of perishable things. He had a priceless, undying soul. Which was practically weighing heaviest in his life?

2. Christ's treatment. (a) He enjoins the old Commandments. Do not overlook this act. Jesus resorts to ancient Hebrew Scripture in a momentous current case of practical life. He finds in that ancient law enough. In a similar case would you probably pursue a similar course? Now get to thinking. What was the Saviour designing here? What was his *idea?* Was he trying and meaning to show the way to the kingdom easy and short; or was he aiming to show that the path was hard and far? Here are deep inquiries. They demand plain answer. What was Christ's *design?* Was he working to soothe or to deepen this youth's unrest?

(b) Now probe the youth's reply: "All these have I always kept." Get the *tone* of those words. Do they ring with moral earnestness? Or are they the utterance of a pharisee? Which was it, the note of devotion, or

delusion, or dishonesty? If he was, in fact, a moral devotee, how did that zeal fail so suddenly before the Lord's final counsel? If he was in error of thought, but of honest purpose, why again did his honesty fail, when he turned away from Christ? Was he then dishonest, perhaps unconsciously so? But how could he fail to see his neighbor's need, and the open beauty of Christ's unfailing charity? Do not evade these questions. They demand the respect of any earnest, would-be counsellor of men. The teacher and guide whose work is wise and whose word is apt will have expert skill in diagnosis. Such indubitably was Christ. Study your man.

(c) Now walk all about the Saviour's response (v. 21). It is the lighted candle in this whole lesson. He counsels a work of thorough-going charity. He bids the youth sell all he has, and give to the poor. He adds two thoughts. Heed them well. He pledges heavenly riches; he invites to follow him. Here are three themes for the rich youth's thought: the needy poor; the career of Christ; the store of treasures above. These are all proposed to his attention with the design of parting the ruler from his wealth.

This proposal the man declines, with frowning face and sorrowing heart.

3. Now here is the place to reach definite answer to the questions left pending above. What kind of a man has the Lord in hand? Work towards the center of the scene by diverse paths. *To* what, *from* what, *by* what, *whom* was Jesus leading?

(a) Study the forces he brings to play: the needs and bonds and joys of the poor; the heavenly gains; his own companionship. Tarry here. What is the range and value of these themes as they lie ordered and opened in the Master's mind. Why were they mentioned? What do they mean? At what do they drive? Towards what do they lure? Answer this. Christ's eye and thought and will were fixed. That is clear. But on *what?*

(b) Study the youth again. Think of his style and guise, of his wardrobe and larder, of his equipage and

servants, of his tastes and employments, of his solitudes and friendships. Think of his transient moods. Think of his pure spiritual being, his immortal part. Now among all these things, what centered and held the Saviour's eye? Precisely at what did the Master point? Think again of those hoards of goods, those waiting human poor, those heavenly stores, Christ's work and way. Here are four realities. Get each one to stand full size, full height. Now think. What is going on?

(c) Now think again. Ponder those contrasted *values*. Those goods: at best they were only transient; at most they were only means. Those human poor, the lordly, kindly Christ: they had lasting worth; they were ends, that all endure, undying and undimmed. That youth: viewed once and hastily, he is a perishing mortal, needing wealth of food and raiment and changing cheer; but viewed again and carefully, he is a deathless being, close-knit in brotherhood of other men, capable of high fellowship with Christ, a fair candidate for heaven.

(d) Now judge the youth. Scan these values. Get close to Christ. What is afoot? Is it this? Christ was probing to see which was weightiest and lordliest in that young life: the body or the soul, the dying or the enduring, the means or the end, the vital or the formal, the moral or the carnal, the human or the animal, the sordid or the spiritual. Or was it this? He was forcing the youth to show whether he was selfish or fraternal, seclusive or social, cold blooded or compassionate. Review all this. The question and the issue are all shut up in the grip of those goods. Will he hold an utter dominion over them; or will they hold an utter dominion over him? A straight, firm answer just here will tell precisely whether or not he is fit for a place with Christ, in heaven, and among his kind.

(e) Now open all your mind to the outcome. The youth prefers his goods. He spurns his neighbor's cry, the Saviour's lead, the spiritual wealth of heavenly life. This crude decision shows his inner grain. And it forces a precise opinion of his worth.

4. Teaching qualities.

(a) The severity. Christ surely made the issue infinitely grave. Might he have been more moderate? Do not answer hastily.

(b) The graciousness. That allusion to the poor. Can you define its quality? That mention of the heavenly wealth. Can you describe its tone? That invitation to discipleship. Did it wear a genial guise? Where, then, was the severity?

(c) The wisdom. Was the Lord discreet? From first to last were his words well said? No true teacher will trifle here.

(d) The power. The Master set an ultimatum. Watch the young man face it. Do you suppose he welcomed it? Do you see how he could evade it? How did Jesus get that so fixed? Here again, any earnest teacher will be in earnest.

(e) The growth. Watch this incident unfold. Why did it not take some other form? Relate the Master's words to the Master's life, and see if you can show how they connect. He simply could not do otherwise. Imagine Jesus loving luxury, hating charity. Would he, *then*, have faced and forced the issue as he did? What query follows next?

LESSON XXIII.

The Lure of Wealth.

Mark 10 : 23-31.

1. Christ's comment, as the young ruler retires. "Only at dire pains can a man of wealth enter the kingdom of God."

(a) Fix the occasion. The rich youth declines the kingdom rather than surrender his goods. He is sidling awkwardly away. Christ takes note of all his darkening selfishness. He has offered to the man his own companionship, the wealth of heaven, all the unmixed joy of human charity. He deeply knows the values he presents. But the youth has turned his back. And now the Master faces towards his followers. They have watched the battle, and seen the youth withdraw, and heard the Saviour's solemn estimate. They utter their dismay. It seems to close to men of wealth the door of life. Right here you may wisely pause and learn to use your eye. It is a critical teaching scene. The engaging youth has not been won; his own disciples are in a maze of wonder. What will the Master do?

(b) He *reiterates* his awful word, but with augmented accent and solemnity. Take the measure of his stately deliberateness. Weigh its dreadful burden. "To save a rich man is all but hopeless. God must intervene." Mark Christ's rigor here. The disciples are stunned. The youth is verging beyond Christ's call or reach. The outcome is awful. It is of the Lord's own conscious ordering. But he leaves it fixed. He does not recall the youth, nor relieve his disciples. It is a mighty scene. But watch the Lord. Get the surge of his heart. He is in evident agony. But he doesn't bend. He knows what he has met. See the darting directness of his thought. His eye looks straight at the power and spell

of wealth. He has found its dominion all but absolute. The Master is at a crisis of his work. Watch his method. Look for mighty words. Learn how to teach.

(c) But keep in mind the vanishing ruler. His *preference* is the background of all this scene. His love for goods outranked his love for Christ or man or heaven. In the final choice his spirit's strength collapsed; his love of selfish, carnal luxury took the throne. The glint of gold, the revel of high feasts, soft ease have outshone and overcome the light of heaven, the face of Christ, and the benediction of the poor. Has the Master been really wise? Must the issue be so stern, must his teaching be so grave? In a final conflict, where will Jesus fix his final stand? What is the inmost texture of his truth? Where must the Teacher ultimately be found? All this is here at stake. No case could be more vital. No situation could be more grave. The Master Teacher faces a mighty shock. Watch how he plants his feet.

2. The kingdom's cost and reward.

(a) Study Peter's question. He sees what the kingdom *costs*. Its exactions are absolute. In any final strife between the kingdom and one's possessions, the surrender of the latter must be complete. This surrender he affirms the disciples to have made. As he interprets Christ, this is the kingdom's price.

And now he asks a strenuous question. "Having surrendered all, what is our *reward?*" Is this correctly stated? Get clear. Did Peter rightly understand the Lord? Make sure. Did the Lord intend to shape the issue so? Decide this carefully. If so, was the Master wise? Was he really prudent with that youth? Were his succeeding words none too tense? The ruler's face is covered with a frown, and he is wholly gone. The disciples' hearts are full of wondering fears. Is this way of teaching to be approved? Would you advise some alteration in his words or ways?

(b) All turns on Christ's reply. Get in step, as he proceeds. Every position he assumes has prodigious purport. Will his assertions relax? Will he grant to earthly wealth some sway? Will he moderate somewhat

the kingdom's claim? Will he counsel some compromise with the wealthy ruler's frown, and yield concessions to the disciples' anxious fears? Search every item, as he goes on. It is the Master Teacher in a momentous scene. He is dealing with a living man. He is equipping his own apostles. Millions more his teachings implicate.

(c) The kingdom's cost. Catch every word. See if they modify the ruler's terms. Then it was "sell all thou hast." Now it is "forsaken house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or fields." Clearly no relaxing. All he said before, he stands by still. All earthly bonds, the very closest, must be unclasped. The kingdom's claims must stand supreme. Some time you will have to ponder this, if you teach for Christ.

(d) The kingdom's reward. Mark every word. Be fully fair with your Lord. Give every term its normal sweep. See what this requires. Nothing but years, eventful years, far-reaching years, the years of eternal life will enable any man to inventory and appreciate the freightage of these words. And deep fellowship and sympathy with the Master are requisite, too. What he intends by that "hundred-fold" of houses and fields and offspring and kindred friends, only love and pride and joys like Christ's can ever understand. Look over those words again. Look into them. Imagine teachers filled and fired with their full power.

(e) The kingdom's tenure. For every one who pays the cost, it is unfailing and absolute. "There is no one but shall receive it." Get the clear, full strength of this assertion. It rings with victory. Imagine that note in every teacher's voice.

3. Now review the whole. Here is a teaching scene in which the tenet taught was felt by the youth, and by the disciple band, and by uncounted multitudes ever since all but intolerably severe. And its rigor stands unbent from first to last. But mark the *manner.* Through it all, does Christ's unchanging stand seem chiefly stern or chiefly kind? Try to answer this. What passions were stirring in the Saviour's breast? Look deeply here. Keep looking. Read it all repeatedly. In

it all was the Lord anything other than a pure and Godly soul, radiant with truth and love? Do not be heedless and limp, leaning on another man. Brace your spirit to a precise and independent reply. Study your Master's manner. How round and full his tone! In no single phrase or syllable does he waver or wince. His assurance is unlimited. And he is explicit to the last degree. His was a style in which authority rose to the note of majesty. How overwhelming is his onset! When he is done, no further challenge is in place. Attempt it. It is for every one to listen and welcome and be still. Then feel the completeness of his human sympathy. All man's normal cravings are given full respect. Nay, for every self-denial there is a hundred-fold return, and that in kind. Then see the glow and unwasting life of that pure motive—for pure love of Christ.

And now attempt an outline of your Lord as he figures in this scene. Test this, scrutinizing every adverb and adjective: He is supremely grave, immutably firm, invincibly true, overwhelmingly strong, incomparably kind. Are not these phrases, or others of equal grandeur and range, minutely true, despite that young man's frown, those disciples' fears, and all the subsequent long ages of dislike? The Master Teacher is a teaching model still.

LESSON XXIV.

The Last First.

Matt. 20 : 1-16.

1. The occasion. Here comes a unique parable, an exceptionally choice example of his teaching art. Study all the surroundings to find what led to its invention. The key to its heart lies in the dismay of the disciples at seeing the moral young ruler's repulse. Rehearse that attentively, noting thoughtfully the youth's apparent excellence. He was a genial nature, of an orderly life, and flattering position and repute. Surely he was a promising candidate for a goodly place in the Master's train. But even he has been repulsed by the Lord's too snug demands. But his outlook was first class. Reject him, and who can be saved? Such thoughts were in the disciples' mind. Thus were they bewildered and cast down. So now the Saviour has to round out his work and make his whole intention plain. Hence this parable.

2. Study the parable, as it stands. It contains a strange device. Yet all is perfectly plain. Its central themes are toil and wage, or work and pay, or earning and claim, or value given for value received. Make your analysis closely precise, keeping fully in mind that departing youth, and those amazed disciples. It is a rarely fine example of how to teach. And the Master is a genius in this art. Lay it open. A vineyard called for culture. Men were hired and set to work. They entered and freely spent their strength. At the close of the day they were lined up for pay. This developed strife. Some had toiled all day. Some had labored but a single hour. Their work and earnings were palpably unlike. This raised the question of merit. It was by no means even. On the score of merit, the faithful, all-day toiler deserved a larger wage than men who idled

eleven useless hours. But the master of the vineyard ordered that all be paid alike; and he strangely stipulated that the reckoning begin with those whose merit from actual toil was least of all. Such is the parable, as it stands.

3. But it is a parable. What now can it *mean?* Why was such an iniquitous scene ever invented by Christ? As a sample of social economics it is glaringly wrong. But, as Jesus fashions it, every stroke is perfectly steady and sure. Its ethics are as plain as they are perverse. Obviously the Lord designed that the inequality should not possibly be overlooked. But some clear intention as clearly lies perfectly under his mastery. What is he trying to teach? Why is he teaching it thus? And teaching it thus, is his teaching likely to succeed? Be sure you deal worthily here. Do not forget where this parable is set. It is designed by Christ to stand squarely in front of that ruler's frown and those disciples' fears. The three must be studied together. It is a striking group from the hand of a Master. And the issues are eternal life, and immortal men, and human poor, and the leadership of Christ, and the magical spell of wealth. Do not forget. It is a group. Now what does the parable mean?

(a) All turns on that striking epigram: "Many shall be last that are first; and first that are last." Mark its repetition. See where it stands. It attends the parable on either hand. Between the two the parable swings. They are the poles of the axis upon which it turns. And they sturdily uphold all that the parable involves. Whatever anomaly the parable contains, no anomaly could be more glaring than the one this epigram is made twice to affirm. It is doubly, if not trebly evident that Jesus intends the *strange perversion* which he has made his parable embrace.

(b) Now look back to that upright and unchristlike youth. Which laborer does he represent? Plainly, the man who toiled all day. From his very youth he has been keeping the commandments. Through all his life's open day he has been laboring to deserve and command highest respect. As he confronted Christ, he was a

white-guised dignitary, vested with all the insignia of general respect. And his honors were deserved. He was properly of the first. Think here of the youth and of the parable together and in detail. Think of the toil, the aim, the claim. And do not forget him who faced and tested and judged that youth, and then, on the spot, devised this parable. What is your opinion of the teaching ingenuity of his mind. See the breadth and accuracy of his deft mind.

(c) But now review that epigram and parable and ruler again. And bring those humble disciples well into view. All men adjudge that ruler among the "first." But see the Lord apply to that ruler's scrupulous life the even scale of his own benignant, Godly, self-denying ministry. Be watchful. See all that young man's dignities and excellences depreciate. He has no joy in heavenly store. He has no zeal of admiration of Christ. He has no burden of pain for human want, no high desire towards a brother's joy. In all these things he stood outranked by Christ whom he squarely spurned, and by all the devoted disciple band. Compare him with the adulterer and slanderer and thief, and, as human estimates commonly run, he is rated "first," and they stand plainly "last." But when he clothed his face with that unchristlike, unheavenly, and uncharitable frown in the presence of men who lamented their sin, and stood ready to follow the Master anywhere, and imitate at any cost his humble and holy life, he rated "last," and they stood plainly "first." Follow this up. Stick fast to the simple, awful fact that the moralist spurned to follow Christ, or feed the poor, or welcome heaven's spiritual joys. As he came to Christ, how did he rate himself? As he turned away, how must he be classed?

(d) This is the outline, and this the animus of this odd parable. Jesus came for sinners. He looked for the "last." His work is a ministry of saving grace. His eye is unceasingly and unerringly on sin. His impulse is irrepressibly towards redeeming and forgiving love. His deep discernment sees far beneath all forms. He detects underneath the rich youth's fine proprieties an

unkindly heart, an unchristlike aim, an unheavenly taste. With all his fine exterior he was a sad and sodden sinner, like the worst. And while those sins were cherished, and the human poor, and the heavenly store, and his own kind life, were all disdained, his place among the men this vivid parable classified was as the very "last."

(e) Such is the gist of this threefold scene from the life of Christ. Can you state it *fully?* Can you close your eyes and think it through—just as it came to the Master's hand, just as his master hand unfolded it, just as he crystallized it all in that epigram and parable? Keep at it till you can. Read it over and over. Think it through and through. Read and think. Think and read. When thought wanders, read. When reading blurs, think. Persist until the vivid incident is vivid for your mind for all coming days. You will find few finer places to see Jesus rise and move towards magisterial primacy. He eclipsed that ruler with the piercing light, he illumined those disciples with the patient love, he carved that balanced epigram and parable with the matchless art of the holy and infinite Master of us all. Study him.

LESSON XXV.

Riches and the Kingdom: Special Studies.

Matt. 19 : 16-20 : 16.

This passage, though truly threefold, is a true unit. But it is a prolific scene. Several special studies clamor for attention.

1. In detail.

(a) Christ made *two* replies to that youth. First he referred him to the Mosaic Law. Then he bade him find the poor. Set those two answers distinctly apart. Then bring them into close comparison. Note how differently they strike the youth. What made this difference? You ought to answer this. But then notice. What was lacking in the first? Was Christ's first reply somehow inadequate? Be heedful here. You can easily err. Then, what was Jesus driving *toward?* Where did he wish to place that youth? Suppose the youth had done as Christ advised? Think this out. The lesson teems with light. Be sure to see it. So you may learn to teach.

(b) Look carefully into that youth's frown and into his saddened heart. What do that sorrow and dislike deeply *mean?* Keep close to the facts. What occasioned that grief and disappointment? It was Christ's words. Turn that candle full upon that young man's scowl. Ferret out its origin.

(c) See if you can set out the disciples' wonder in the form of an argument. Just what did they challenge or resent? What statement or treatment of the ruler's case would have suited them? Unlock their thoughts. In that seemingly simple question, "Who then can be saved?" is the substance of a syllogism. Open it out.

(d) In the same way set in logical order Jesus'

answer to Peter's inquiry. Was it complete? Can you uncover Christ's fundamental postulate?

(e) And now, that parable and epigram. Imagine them both left out. Define the case as it stood before those two inventions of his fertile mind appeared. Was there any call for something more? Just what need was met by those twin products of his creative thought? Why did he invent that balanced epigram? Is there in it any element, more or less, than is in the parable? If not, then why the parable?

(f) Then why were epigram and parable so *indirect?* If they were designed to set sharp contrast between the terms of merit and the terms of grace, then why were those essential words left out? Fasten into this. There may lie just beneath the surface here a beautiful secret of fine teaching art.

2. In general.

(a) Christ's clarity. How open to the Master's eye, from the very start, all the inner deeps, and all the world-wide meaning of this rich, young, moral ruler's life and choice! This well deserves your admiration. But it also calls for studious prayer, if one would teach in the Saviour's stead his message of mercy for all the world. The Lord may stand nearer, in the high wonder of his true vision, than you think. In this sort of insight *character* opens the eye. Are you sure you understand this?

(b) Christ's moral refinement. How absolutely pure and sure the Saviour's moral sense! It was not by accident or magic, or a happy chance that he discerned so instantly this ruler's moral crudity. Christ was in his inmost soul and life the essence of pure excellence. By every instinct of his soul he would counsel instantly towards heavenly loving-kindness, full and real like his own. No carnal compromise was possible. Here, too, is food for a Christian teacher's meditation.

(c) Christ's *moral earnestness.* Feel his energies here. How full and strong they are! There was in his daily walk a sublime momentum towards the right. He would not, he could not palter, or dally, or equivocate. Where many another life would halt, and shrink, and

be unsure, he shows a rush, a plunge, a ready, hearty confidence, an undelayed decisiveness that betokened that his moral qualities had reached a manly, full maturity. He was no moral weakling. Compare his moral stature with the sinking power and faint amazement of all those other men. He stood among them all, a moral giant.

(d) Christ's *spirituality.* Here lay coiled the mighty spring of the Master's moral strength. He was splendidly aware of his inner being's worth. Scanty food and humble attire he could readily endure. For outer seeming also he had little care. Luxury and vanity he could easily contemn. Think here. Had the ruler had a sense of this fine quality in Jesus' life, would he have been so ready to haste and make that low obeisance before his eye? Just what is this quality worth? And how does its presence work?

(e) Christ's respect for *eternity.* About how did this figure in Christ's reply to the youth and to Peter? Did it really dominate both answers? This is no light inquiry. Think of the ruler. His inquiry had apparent respect for eternal life. But look underneath his words. Which value was paramount with him in fact, the eternal or the perishing? Now think of Peter. Then think again of Christ. What is your honest opinion of him, as a teacher, at just this point?

(f) Christ's *simplicity.* Here is a fine quality in teaching. Study out its presence in this scene. How many themes did Jesus have in hand? How did they stand arranged and ordered in his thought? Which one was pivotal? Do not get tired here. Simplicity is a stronghold of teaching power. In this threefold scene it stands forth to view like a lofty, well-poised tower. Can you define it with any precision?

(g) Christ's *vividness.* Trace this out. That indication of the poor, that invitation to his band, that reference to a camel threading through a needle's eye, those details of toil and pay, that living parable, that fine-edged epigram—how real, how visible, how familiar it all seems! Here is perfect art.

(h) Christ's imperishable validity. We call this

scene an "incident." But other incidents vanish. This one shines forever. How do you *explain* this?

(i) Christ's *profundity*. This whole scene centers about an individual case, the ruler. But Jesus seems to find in it a universal law. This deserves long-drawn attention. Do some thinking. If you but know it, you are facing a splendid trait of Christ. It is a trait that gives all thinking poise. It makes a thoughtful man a sage. It guides the sage to true philosophy.

Study Jesus here. Note the poise and trend of every turn and term. As he arranged those elements about that youth, he saw a world in miniature. He saw all men in this one youth. World currents were swirling there. And Jesus shaped his course to circumnavigate the globe. Here is a principle gleaming into view, well worth your eye. Christ's horizon was that of Palestine. The men he met were mostly Jews, antique, oriental, often strange. But his deep eye swept every sky, and his true thought sounded every heart of man. Ponder this. When Jesus looked into that Jewish ruler's unsuspecting eye, what did he see? Oh for teachers with an eye and mind as profoundly, truly human as Christ's!

LESSON XXVI.

Zaccheus.

Luke 19 : 2-10.

1. Here is Zaccheus. He is a publican prince. This means authority over subalterns; standing and favor under Roman magistrates; power in financial circles; dominion over a wide section of Jewish territory and trade.

(a) Think of a man like this. Fancy his aptitudes, propensities, tastes. Look into his nature, and habit of life, and environment, and ideals. Think of the nature of his office and duty, of the powerful tendency towards hardness in manner and heart. Conceive the fine hate and real fear his person would agitate among those Jews. Think of the moral hazards continually besieging such a man. And as Christ draws near, think of the obstacles to his truth and love such a case would be liable to contain.

(b) There are those throngs, surrounding Christ Study them. Note not so much their number, or their push for Christ, as their prepossessions. Keep in mind the loyal Jewish hate of publicans. Probe into the deeps right here. Imagine, and take a bit of pains, how they would stare and talk, as Jesus orders them all to halt, while he helps down Zaccheus.

(c) Now picture the Master verging along towards that wayside tree. See how he reigns among those throngs. How compact they are about his face. Their eagerness is almost rude. A physical underling, like Zaccheus, has no chance. But judge how Jesus was engrossed by the attentions of the throng. He was its heart center. The pull and strain upon his thought and speech and heart were unceasing and tense. He was all but overwhelmed. And this grand popularity must have

been the Master's wish and choice. For this he sent the Seventy on before. It was part of his great design to gather up great throngs.

(d) But now look somewhat deeper. What were the attitude and errand of that multitude? See their shallow feelings change and flit. What was in Zaccheus' heart? He was like a little child in eagerness to get a passing glimpse of Christ. Now turn all your study on that lowly, lordly Christ. Mark how his glowing eye is searching through and through that throng to find one son of man whose soul is tired of sin and hungry for redemption.

2. Now see Jesus at his proper work. It is a speaking scene, worth any teacher's ear and eye.

(a) He faces instantly the certain chiding of the multitude, bids their onset pause, commands their empty eagerness to fall back and wait; and in the open presence of their imperious prejudice, he calls the hated publican to his side, honors openly his honest eagerness, and in the glad fraternity of host and guest passes publicly into Zaccheus' home. Thus the gentle Saviour dares and does. Without an instant's pause or the least disguise, he defies outright the certain lapse of their respect, and hazards their complete departure from his train. This is one aspect of his finely courteous act.

(b) But see the other side. He enters festal fellowship with a congenial friend. He sits as honored guest. Zaccheus acts the host, attentive, generous, proud. Jesus has found a pupil worth his while. Now he can speak and teach, bear witness and unveil, just as his mighty, friendly heart inspires. And Zaccheus has his hidden wish complete. Jesus is right before his eye. Nothing now can obstruct or delay the full shining of his fair majesty. The disapproving and undiscerning throng is held aloof and at halt, until the open eye of this ambitious dwarf shall drink its fill. So the communion of model pupil and model teacher flows on for one glad hour unchecked and full. It is a scene and enterprise worth any teacher's mind.

(c) Think this all over, back and forth. See what you make of it. The scene teems with light for teachers.

Move in among that forsaken multitude. Hear what they say. Find what they think. Do not play the idler, or plead incompetence. That throng is fully human. So are you. You can find out the very heart of their conceit. Their mouths are full of comments on Zaccheus, and on Christ, and on themselves. Take your pen, and make close record of what they say. This is the hard but certain way to learn to teach. Look into Christ's emotions. They must have been strong; they must have been mixed. He never left that multitude without a pang. But as he watched Zaccheus, his spirit must have burst in song. Study that busy publican. Count up the cost and joy and carefulness of his hospitality. He is being mightily changed. Watch his growth. Pick up your pencil again, and tell from what, to what he is being transformed.

3. The *meaning* of it all. Could you but explicate this yourself!

(a) That throng is a medley. They do admire the Lord. But they despise the publican. They packed about the Master like sheep. But where his life's chief joy attained its crest, they deemed his taste abhorrent, and took high offense. And Christ was utterly frank. He never veiled his grace. Can you explain all this? It would be a good thing for a teacher to know. Suppose you try to measure the strength of downright honesty.

(b) Christ *dominates* Zaccheus. But Zaccheus was a potent force, and all its exercise had been self-centered. He was a wealthy prince of tax collectors. But Christ made him a model of philanthropy. Here is enheartenment for teachers. But note Christ's thoroughness here. Zaccheus was actually born again. He became another man. Set the two, the old Zaccheus and the new, in detailed comparison. Get the grip of his old hand when taking toll. Then see his hand grow gentle, as he stands in the embrace of Christ. Do some thinking right here. No teacher could better spend an hour.

(c) But *how* did Christ accomplish it? We have no record of their words. But do we need it? Just think. But an hour ago Christ was in the focus of a

mighty throng. Now he is in Zaccheus' very home. Think again. The Master is fast nearing to his cross.

Think still again. Jesus in the publican's home was the same pure, loving, truthful, lowly soul as everywhere. And think again. The Saviour would soon be fed. And with little delay or ado he would become the host, and Zaccheus would sit as guest. How freely, then, those two eager souls would blend! The Saviour's redemptive love was all astir. That meant self-sacrificing grace. This would mellow and deepen and richly burden every word. Can you not run on with this?

(d) Mark the *watchfulness* of Christ. That deferential throng would have blurred any eye but Christ's. And Zaccheus was a dwarf and a publican, and thrust away beyond the crowd, and in his weakness hidden in a tree. But Jesus did not fail to spy his face, nor to fathom his heart, nor to grandly recognize his respect. Here is counsel for a teacher. Spy out the ready heart. Have Jesus' eyes to see.

(e) Christ's *independence*. He was much in throngs. But they never ruled him. He was always and everywhere no other than himself. There are grounds for this. And they are worth your search.

(f) The *faithfulness* of Christ's grace. Here is a scene where pride, or caution, or fear, or some sort of wise farsightedness might easily have claimed respect. He could easily have passed Zaccheus. See if you can compute the issues of such a course. Do you quite dare pass this by? It has big meaning.

(g) The meaning of an *act*. First get in view the Saviour's closing word: "This man is a son of Abraham. I came to save the lost." These words publish Christ's life design. Now think. He pays this public deference to Zaccheus. All men vote the man a "sinner." But as the Lord goes on, Zaccheus stands transformed. How more openly, or beautifully, or effectively could the Saviour make his mission plain? What a hint for teachers!

LESSON XXVII.

The Stewardship Idea.

Luke 19 : 11-27.

1. The occasion. This parable sprang up somewhere in that incident with Zaccheus. You need to find its *origin*. Only so can you ever study your Master's art. To search this out, there is nothing like reading the Zaccheus sketch and this parable separately, over and over. If you are really resolute, you will do this earnestly, until you catch main undertones and outstanding notes, and find to a certainty what voices correspond. Persist in this. Find out what things are central, what are trivial. Then you are ready, but not till then, to judge your Master's teaching art. Take the following items. They are certainly commanding marks.

(a) Men were somehow brought to think the kingdom was just about to come. How this thought got lodged is not explained. But recall the ministry of the Seventy. Their impressive work must have been mainly done. Christ was near his cross. He alluded repeatedly to his impending crisis. Its awful overhanging burden must shape and steady powerfully his every posture and step. Men would hang about the mysteries of his speech and study the darkening horizon of his life in daily expectation of portentous things.

(b) They unhesitatingly accredited all its blessings to themselves. The Jews were exclusively the kingdom's beneficiaries. Its glorious dawning would be the brilliant vindication of their hopes.

(c) All publicans and harlots and aliens would be cast out. They were sinners, all unclean, unfit for fellowship with the chosen and select of the seed of Abraham.

(d) Jesus' persistent friendliness towards moral reprobates aroused their ire. Such action they felt

unbearable. Such a leader they deemed an outlaw. His style was no example for them. His principles they would unanimously abjure. This on one hand.

(e) But on the other hand, Jesus came for sinners. He stood for mercy. His search was for the penitent. His prime official impulse was towards the sick and sad and lost. Broken confessions of unrighteousness were music to his ear. He loved to work repair.

(f) And he was of royal line and worth. He was a king of men. He was continually sweeping masses in his train. In every throng he was easily sovereign. His lordship, even when bitterly disliked, was resistless. He laid a master hand on every human chord. He uncovered in men deeps they had never seen. He published sins they had never divulged. He tightened obligations which hosts of men preferred to slacken and relax. He always spoke as from a throne. He was inherently a true-born king.

(g) Features something like these mark this landscape. Scan them carefully. They have a striking correspondence. On one side spread the throngs with jutting, ugly prejudice; among them stands the Saviour, a ruler of men, eager for righteousness, ready for sacrifice; close by stands the sturdy and transformed Zaccheus. On the other side looms this parable, fitted and designed by Christ to voice the needed proclamation to those men.

2. Now analyze the parable. This work is omitted here. But it needs to be carefully done. Then match the two together: setting Christ, in the Zaccheus scene, over against the prince in the parable; these spleeny pharisees, over against those insurgents; the like of the transformed Zaccheus, over against the faithful steward; and Christ's unyielding decisiveness, over against the final, awful verdict of the returned king. Then get the mighty amplitude and impulse of the parable all before you and well under way. Name its primal values.

(a) The master and owner is *sovereign* alone. The servants are only stewards. They have no native title to their goods. Their tenure is by commission. It can be any time recalled. The prince is lord.

(b) The servants are *subordinates.* Not one of them is born a prince. They are under irreversible lordship and law.

(c) The prince withdraws. This leaves each steward essentially *free.* For the time his mastery is absolute. His own sole judgment is his own sole guide. His own free will is his own full lord. The measure of his own ambition is the sole standard of his plan. For the period while the prince is away, each servant's responsibility and liberty are full.

(d) What each steward achieves, while the prince delays, stands to that steward's credit alone. It is truly *his own.* And yet he who trades, and that on which he trades, and all that he acquires, are all and each undeniably his lord's. Thus each servant has a double outlook. He may show of what mettle he is really made, and this as freely as any prince; and he may demonstrate his deference and devotion to his lord, sealing up in his own expanding worth, and in all the increasing wealth, signal tokens of his faithful love and zeal. Or he may fashion the exact reverse.

(e) Hereby develops a system of irrefragable right. Equities emerge. Relationships ripen. Judgments ensue. *Awards* become inevitable. The servant's stewardship and the kingship of the prince must be indubitable. The servant must yield respect. The king must be supreme. The servant who has stood up in his free manhood and wrought like a prince in his master's right, must receive a prince's reward. All who annul and contemn their lord's control must find that lordship's only and utter vindication in their own complete undoing.

(f) Such is the parable. Study it all again and again, and fit its parts to that Zaccheus scene. Keep this study up, until your Master's skill begins to stand in all its beautiful strength.

3. Christ's **teaching traits.**

(a) He is unanswerable. This parable stands foursquare. Or better, it is like a *cube.* Try overturning it. It is absolutely unassailable. It postulates one lord. All the rest are subordinates. Sense the simple strength of this.

(b) He is finely magisterial. His skill and power are peculiarly those of a *teacher.* He was a teaching prince. He taught. That was his one art. All his work is to illuminate. This is grand.

(c) He is incomparably *deft.* Do you see his task. Study the mood and attitude of that throng. Keep in view Zaccheus. It was a case of infinite delicacy. The crowds were in no shape for being taught. They were hot and hurt. But they sorely needed counsel. Some hand must touch them. That touch cannot be faint or timid with any fear. It must be resolute and sure. Now study your Master's wit and art and quick device in building up this parable. What fine self-mastery! What cool far-sightedness! What easy lordliness!

(d) But he is *thorough,* beyond all compromise. Mark all the meaning of the introduction of that true-born prince. That single feature gave shape to everything. Its authority and right stood paramount to the utter end. Do you see this?

(e) See Christ's gentle and *deep concern* for men. See him befriend Zaccheus. That is ideal. Think how he held that throng. He must have shown unwearying good-will. Then see the mild reflection of his full-orbed benignity in Zaccheus' shining change.

(f) But he was unpopular. Read again that parable. Scan again that throng, as the Master and the publican drew out. So he fared repeatedly. In many a moral crisis Jesus and the pharisees parted hands. Here is a good place to get it clear. Set the publican in the midst. Think twice. See what is at stake with Christ. Think what is at stake with those pharisees. *No truce* is possible. Now study Christ. How genial is his trait! But how bitter is his plight! In such a tangle of actual life, how and what shall the Master teach?

(g) So study the scene on every side. It is a royal display of the King of teachers in the very thick of his work. Carve out his profile. He is a keen-eyed, far-sighted, well-poised, invincible, affectionate, true-hearted Master of his art.

LESSON XXVIII.

Is Man Immortal?

Luke 20 : 27-40.

1. Get acquainted with these sadducees. They were a skeptical, free-thinking, aristocratic set, prone to doubt and deride and deny in matters of religion. Now they assail Christ. On the surface of their words they outline a knotty problem. But look into this.

(a) Were they seeking light? Did they think they were? Would listeners so believe? How does their outer aspect strike you, after all?

(b) Was their case *real?* Be careful here. In more ways than one this situation is typical. When men have set opinions, and are trying to "prove" their case, how natural is it, in your observation, to test the opposing view by a likely and quite life-like, but after all unreal "supposition"? Can you find signs of this here?

(c) Were they really in doubt? Were they in fact unsure whether the dead were raised, and in that uncertainty trying to get some convictions fixed? Were their minds open or closed, judging solely from the way they put the case?

(d) Their statement ends in a question. But think. And get right to the point. Given the case, as they portrayed it; was a *question* the natural termination of their speech?

(e) They came to Christ as though for arbitration. This act seems to betoken signal respect. Was that seeming deference real? Were they aiming to recognize or to depreciate Christ's work?

(f) All the above inquiries concern the core of their honor. They require true, fair answers. But now study the substance of their case. Upon precisely what were their thoughts focused, as they spread out that problem:

its difficulty or its strength? Were they presenting a hard case, or a clear case? That is, was their attitude assault or defense? Just why those heaped up details? As you think of answering them, do you view them as believing something, or as denying something? Just *what* are you facing?

(**g**) What was the material out of which their inquiry was built? What substance went into its point? In general, it was the resurrection. But be particular. Resurrection of *what?* What was the real ultimate substance of their proposition? How did their minds imagine things, once the dead were raised? You cannot wisely avoid answering this. Jesus' answer shows that he inspected this point with sharp preciseness. The fact is, they went all astray in their idea of what the resurrection really is. The very center of gravity of their case lay in an error, and an error of the grossest sort. Do you see this?

(**h**) They appeal to Scripture. But did their case and Scripture coincide? Was their case a case *in point?* Does the law of Moses lead into such ludicrous issues? Just what is their fault here? You feel there is one. Locate it. Such cases perpetually recur. Learn how to handle them.

(**i**) They waken echoes of an age-long *party strife.* Catch those notes of conflict here. They were plotting to lead the Lord of peace into a trampled battlefield. What do you think of this? Do you ever encounter the same design?

2. The Lord's reply.

(**a**) He makes straight for the central error in their conception of what the resurrection really is. They deemed the physical states prevalent here, translated and continued bodily there, in all their carnal grossness. This notion Jesus roundly assails with a plump denial. In the resurrection they do not marry; neither do they die; they are instead as angels; they are sons of God.

Now linger here. Learn to think. Think of the very nature and essence of their crude conceit. Go right into it. It was a ridiculous idea—just as they carefully designed to make it. But it was shameful, too. It

showed a low mind. But follow the stroke of the Saviour's sword. With one quick thrust their case collapsed. And it collapsed beyond repair.

(b) But study that inserted phrase: "Neither do they die." This is splendidly discerning, straight-out, and triumphant. Read all this conference with just one thought: what is meant by *death?* How does it relate to marriage? You may profitably tarry right here many a thoughtful hour. Those sadducees had no sense of "life." Pure spirit being lay beyond their ken. They never stopped to think what lay enfolded in that bright and vital phrase, "the sons of God." But here is Jesus' shining citadel. Strive and climb till you reach securely the immortal Master's high, clear, pure, point of view. Then fathom what it *means* nevermore to die; what it means to be as angels; what it verily means to be sons of God; what the resurrection gloriously means.

(c) Thus Jesus swiftly pillories their low mistake. But lay out before your eye his shining instruments. Examine the *tools* he used. They were all edged and tempered in the skies. See them: "angels," "sons of God," "sons of the resurrection," "they cannot die"—a goodly, shining set of Christian teachers' tools. They are far-flashing, deep-piercing blades. They are like straight, swift rays of light. They are pure Truth.

(d) And now the Lord of Life attacks the central tenet of the sadducees. They deny the resurrection. Christ delivers one full blow. "The dead are raised." Mark his method. He appeals to the Mosaic word. But how different his touch and use from theirs! Mark his penetration. Note his choice. It is no chance citation. He selects a fundamental word, Jehovah's mention to Moses of the name of Abraham: "I am the God of Abraham." Here is a word that affirms a vital bond. It was uttered centuries after Abraham was dead. Out of these immeasurable deeps Jesus draws forth an irrefutable claim. He asserts with magnificent meaning and strength: "He is not a God of the dead, but of the living." Here are words of tremendous depth. And they make reply impossible. Study them well. They

are infinitely full. They are infinitely brave. They are infinitely clear. They are like the unclouded sun.

3. Teachers being in mind, many things cry out for mention. Lend your hearing ear. Be yourself.

(a) The disaster to a scholar of a perverse use of Scripture.

(b) The disaster of neglect of Scripture.

(c) The pity of it, when the inner eye is blind.

(d) They dared not question any more. What do you think of this? Did it mean being smart, or dull, or proud, or dashed, or whipped?

(e) The priceless value to a teacher of a knowledge of the power of God. With Jesus this was a free, splendid, omnipotent reality.

(f) The resources in Scripture for a teacher who has sailed and sounded their seas. Watch the practiced eye of Christ. Those broad horizons were a familiar sight. Everywhere they gave his thoughtful eye the light of heaven.

(g) Christ's deep discernment of the nature of man. Man is not mortal merely. This life does not exhaust him. He is a son of God. He is immortal. Here are prime postulates for any teacher under Christ.

(h) Mark the Saviour's brevity. He makes no haste. But he makes no delay. He is straightway at his task. And he is soon done.

(i) His balance. He is unruffled, self-possessed. His stroke is instant, powerful and sure. And when delivered, he stands as steadfast as the hills.

LESSON XXIX.

The Cost of Glory.

John 12 : 20-33.

1. Find where this scene occurs. It was quite possibly his very last appearance in public life; and thus his next facing of the Jews was under arrest. Notice the caption chosen—The Cost of Glory. Read the paragraph often. Jesus is to utter pregnant teachings.

2. Note how the Master's words begin. He first alludes to "glory." Follow the whole paragraph through with this one theme in mind. Gather up and hold together its different names and forms and phases. This means close work. But it is the only way to find how the Master taught.

(a) Prolific fruit-bearing (v. 24). Are you willing to weigh each word? Think of a grain of wheat "alone." Then think of "bearing," and "fruit," and "much." Value each word as your Saviour did. They all suggest life, growth, increase, abundance, value. Try to pronounce each term as Jesus would. Now bring alongside "fruit" that word "glory." What is Christ meaning to say? Try to think of "fruit" as "glory." Here seem to be two names for one thing. One seems to be literal. One seems like a figure. But think at leisure. Are both figures? May both be literal? What does the Master *mean?* Keep reading the whole paragraph till you are able to decide.

(b) Now (v. 25) Jesus speaks of "keeping" one's soul, and of "eternal life." The preceding phrase speaks of "losing" one's soul. That means perishing utterly. Keep this contrast before you. Now fasten your mind on "keeping the soul unto life eternal," and bring alongside that thought that "glory" and "fruit." Here are three terms. Do they really anywhere near coincide?

Use a bit of time here. And see that your mind really works. Look at each term apart. Then look at two together. Then combine the three. Why did Jesus use them all? Would two have answered? Which two are best? Is there more than one idea? What was Jesus trying to say? Read all the paragraph repeatedly and find out some reply.

(c) Now study v. 26. It tells of the reward of ministering to Christ. Two phrases express it: "being with" Christ, and "honor" from the Father. Here again, compare and combine. You have "glory," "fruit," "life," "fellowship," "honor." But note. As Christ began, that "glory" was his own. Now, as he speaks of "honor," it belongs to disciples; this "honor" is theirs. Has his thought made some transit? If so, where? Or, is his "glory" one with their "honor"? Settle down to some of your best thinking here. Face up to that word "fellowship," "being with" Christ. Is that his glory, or their honor? Think here. Digest the whole again. It is wholesome nutriment, and worthy exercise for any teacher. Look forward to v. 32: "I will draw all men unto myself." Do all these phrases culminate in that? Let your study and thought, just here, be worthy of your Lord.

(d) And now listen to that voice from heaven in v. 28: "I will glorify it again." This answers a prayer. That prayer surged up out of a deep soul "trouble." It cries out: "Save me." Let that petition ring its full note. Catch every wave and echo. It is a vastly solemn melody. But it attunes with another note: "Glorify thy name." Are you able to hear at once the full music of the two? Do you see how the blending two are met and balanced in that heavenly antiphon: "I will glorify it"? Here is music of melody, harmony, antiphony worth your study. Listen as the angels do. Study out their interplay.

(e) But now stand a little aloof, and survey the whole. The disciples and the Greeks seem forgotten. The Saviour seems as in the supplication in Gethsemane, where he strove and cried in solitude. But read v. 30. This prayer is not a closet plea. Its supplication and its

response were designed for the multitude that stood by. And it leads on to portentous words. Read vv. 31-32 about the crisis of the world, and the world-prince's judgment, and that ominous "lifting up." And now assemble that trouble, that prayer, that answer, that world crisis, that death by the cross, around that answer: "I will glorify (my name) again." See how God's glory crowns and dominates it all. But see its cost. And now rehearse it all again. Christ's "glory," the "fruit," the "life," the "fellowship," the "honor," God's "glory." What does it all *mean?*

(f) And now once more that jubilant shout, "I will draw all men unto myself." Let it ring right here, as the mighty Saviour meant it should. And you stand back where all these voices blend. Fix your ear for each. Listen to them all. See what "glory" *means.* See how all harmonize beautifully, when centered about the Father's name; equally, when centered about the Christ; and equally again, when centered about disciples. The heavenly splendor of all three is one; and in that splendor all those glories merge. Now push right into this. Is the foregoing analysis at all correct? To answer this question is the main purport of this study. It is a task for teachers.

3. But thus far only one side of the lesson has been in hand. It began with the "glory" of Christ, and ended with his victory on the cross. Now take up the theme of "Cost." Review the lesson again. Start in from the cross. Its shadow falls everywhere.

(a) The grain of wheat must "die."

(b) One must "hate" his life. Man must not shelter his soul from pain and outlay. He must consecrate it unto sacrifice, as Jesus did.

(c) A disciple must "minister" unto Christ. Recall the rich young ruler. Christ's follower must take with him the path of lowliness, cost, and sorrow.

(d) Now combine these forms of "cost" just as you did those forms of "glory." They embody, in fact, but a single thought. But that thought is rich with all the value of the sacrificial life and death of Christ. But keep in mind your special aim. You are studying the Master

Teacher in his teaching work. Catch the secret of his art. Get into his fertile inner mind. Find his aim. Get the outer girth of his thought. Then watch his mind invent and shape apt ways of telling what he thinks. Test his wisdom in his art by cutting out from his varied speech each varying form of saying it. So note the loss. Thus compute the gain. Then judge his skill. But it will take a deal of thinking, and not a little sobering life to give your mind full vision of the wide horizons in some of Jesus' words. Try this in that word "follow me" in v. 26. It took Peter all his life to find what that short utterance meant. And so with Paul. And so with Jeremiah.

4. Now sum up the whole.

(**a**) What is this lesson anyway? Is its primary topic Glory or Sacrifice? Or does it set the two in equilibrium?

(**b**) What force is central here, Christ's wisdom or his character?

(**c**) How does the Master carry himself here, as well-poised and steady, or anxious and perturbed?

(**d**) What do you think of that prayer in the midst, as a coefficient of his teaching power?

(**e**) What world forces come to view in this brief paragraph? Are you confident you can list them all?

(**f**) Just what is Jesus talking *against?*

(**g**) Just what is Jesus arguing *for?*

(**h**) Notice how fluid Jesus' mind is. How freely it moves from verge to verge through all the moral realm!

LESSON XXX.

Vine Culture and Soul Culture.

John 15 : 1-11.

1. The figure. Get well familiar with its elements: the husbandman, the vine, the branches, the fruit, the barrenness, the culture, the abundance, the pruning, the burning. Here is another parable. Explore it thoroughly. Keep in mind two things: its teaching *art;* and its teaching *aim.* It is a fine study for a teacher. It is a marvel of teaching power. It has a beauty that will never fade, a freshness that will never stale. It is like a pure, full spring, unwasting, undefiled.

(a) Note first the *vitality* of the figure. It is a parable from life. It points to a growing plant, not a builded house. This is clear to your mind, you think. But is it? State the difference. Define a living plant. Will you really do it? Get your mind fastened here. Be exact and minute. Then read it all again, and see how well-directed and distinct your Master's thought is.

(b) Get your eye upon the *parts* of the figure. Note the figure, not the vine. Be precise here. There are several essential items. Can you name them? We call it the parable of the "vine." But could you fairly call it the parable of the "branches," or of the "fruit," or of the "joy"? Could you truthfully term it the parable of the "husbandman," or of vine-culture, or of vital relations? Is it a parable of life? Get clear about these parts. Define each one alone. This is more needful than you think. You think you already understand. But close this book right here, and write out a parable of the vine. Try to do it exactly and with nice art. Make it fit a man's religious life. Try this. You may find it more needful than you think to put some resolute study in right here.

(c) Observe the *unity* of the figure. A vine is strikingly manifold. The branch is not the vine. The root is not the grape. The grape is not the bunch. The seed is not the pulp. The skin is not the juice. The bark is not the leaf. The tendril is not the stem. The flavor is not the blush. The weight is not the size. The life is not the growth. So multiform is a vine. And yet we never designate it by a plural. We always nominate it in the singular.

Now study the workings of the Master's mind just here. He is describing our religious life. Imagine some object void of unifying life and growth—say, a cathedral. Would that answer Jesus' purpose just as well? Be careful here. Does the idea in the mind of Christ require, for illustration, some such a *unity* as a growing vine? Study into this. It leads to the very rudiments of the teaching art.

(d) The *husbandry*. You know how a vine behaves that has no care. It is a wayward, straggling, aimless tangle, its foliage vastly superfluous, its fruitage acrid, undersized, and scant. You know how a vine behaves, when trained and pruned. It is a bower, burdened with beautiful fruit. You know how this amazing change is wrought by the watchful eye and steady hand and prescient plan of the husbandman. Now do some thinking on vine culture. Walk through a neglected field. Sit down in a trellised garden. Think, the way the Master did. He did some thinking here. As he threaded through this parable, he picked his path with masterly care. Think of this parable, with the husbandman's care left out. Then answer, and know that you are interpreting Christ, why did he put that feature in? And do not forget that it is all and only a parable.

(e) The divine *mystery*. This paragraph deals with vine culture and soul culture. Both concern life. Now examine, as carefully as you like, either side, the soul or the vine, at this point, the factor of life. You face a mystery. Set all else aside, and look on a growing vine. Do your best. You say the vine "grows." Its tendrils stretch, its leaves expand, its clusters swell, its mellowing juices flow far away upwards and fill God's

dainty reservoirs. It is a living, a life-giving thing. And, as you look, you say: Behold, a parable from the plant to illustrate the life of man. But what do you mean by an "illustration"? Our life relation to Christ is a deep and hidden wonder. So we make it plain by bringing in a vine. This is what Jesus did. But there is a *wonder* in the vine, just as hidden and profound. Deep answers unto deep. Now think. Just what has this parable done? Just *how* does Christ teach? If you have eyes to see, here is wisdom surpassing all the sages.

2. The direct teaching. Here we leave the parable and the vine one side. We face the soul of man. We study man's religious life. To begin with, set down all its elements. Get the matter straight. Put the three essentials first: Christ, the vine; disciples, the branches; the Father, the husbandman. Then set by itself the interrelation of the three: Christ's support of the disciples; the disciples' life in Christ; the Father's ownership and lordship over all. Then name the other factors: the discipline unto purity; the nourishing unto growth and joy. Now study each.

(a) Who is Christ? It is easy to say, he is the "vine." But that is the parable; it is a figure, an illustration. Think. The "vine" is a parable, a figure, an illustration of *what?* Read vv. 7-11, with your very mind in your very eye. Define your Lord in the very terms he offers there. He is your teacher and lover and Lord. You are his disciple and beloved and obedient servant. He brings you truth and love and pure joy. He is the outflowing and inflowing source of these pure, unfailing rivulets of real, soul life. Now bring in again the parable. Let it "illustrate." But be sure it opens your eye to Christ. And now estimate his *art.*

(b) What does the Father do? He embodies his love and truth in Christ, that so our souls may receive that fullness, to the glory of his name and the full joy of the Lord. Try your bravest to look in upon the Father's work. All that obstructs that truth and love and true discipleship in us he takes away. What a superbly vigorous and delicate work! Work fit for the hand of God. But unto what teeming increase! Think

again of the parable. And *again* estimate your Master's art.

(c) What is the bountiful burden of fair fruit? This: We are to have continual fellowship in his ministry of instruction, his proffer of love, his high-wrought joy. What a harvest of Gospel increase! Think into this. How this ingathering is going to make us humble, as Gospel beneficiaries! And how it will rouse our souls to extolling song at sight of him in whom we live! And how pure that joy will be! It is fed on truth and love, the very essence and energy of pure spirit, the very qualities that make us personal and immortal. They are very life, never amenable to decay. Such is the "fruit." Again recall the parable. And *still again* make estimate of your Master's art.

(d) What is the "purging" and the "burning"? Do you deem them trivial? Argue it out with any vine-dresser. Then carry your argument up to the Father of the Lord. Think of the havoc and burden and waste through hate, and untruth and pain, how they cripple and mar and blight the soul. What will you do with them? They are all too real. What will you do? Once more explore that parable. And *once again* inspect the full completeness of your Master's skill.

3. Now summarize and scrutinize the whole. Note the fullness of Christ's thought. Weigh all his spiritual burden. Test his power. Try to reverse him anywhere. Face his themes: truth, love, life, joy, purity, lordship, docility, obedience, personal communion, glory, judgment. See how simply these themes are related. Do you discern the charming unison of the whole? It is passing masterly, and passing beautiful.

Have you really noticed v. 3? All this purity, unto all this fruitfulness, unto all this joy, unto all that glory, is by means of the Master's "word." What a text for teachers!

LESSON XXXI.

Facing Roman Eagles.

John 18 : 28-38.

1. The situation. This is the morning of the crucifixion day. Already, this same morning, Jesus has stood before the Jewish court, and received death sentence for blasphemy. Now he is brought to Pilate, the Roman governor, for execution. All the Jews stay outside, wishing to keep undefiled. Jesus stands within, bound, before the governor. When Pilate goes out to ask the Jews Christ's crime, they refuse, at first, to tell. At last they said they had found him guilty of subverting the people, withholding the tax, aspiring to the throne—none of them the real ground of their verdict.

2. Christ before Pilate. The governor now goes in and faces Christ. He fastens first upon the front offense, asking Jesus squarely if he pretends to be king of the Jews.

(a) Now try to see how Jesus' mind sets to work. Here is a thrust out of the dark. This charge is *new*. But a single hour before, he was charged and tried and doomed as a blasphemer. Whence and wherefore this momentous alteration? Moreover, among kings there are widely different types. Towards what is Pilate driving? Is he speaking as a Roman; or is he echoing some new conspiracy of the Jews? Remember, Pilate and Jesus had probably never met before. As he faces the governor now, he stands laden with the penalty of death for assuming or aspiring to be a king. How shall he reply? He must find from Pilate whence the insinuation springs, what the insinuation means. Measure the Master as he halts. Try and get his own conception of this scene, his view of Pilate, his feeling for himself.

(b) Now study Jesus' *return question.* It is not an answer. It holds Pilate off and bids him first explain whose question he propounds. How will you view this? Does this inquiry spring from caution? Could it be a veiled assault on Pilate? Might it be a way of hinting that the accused was not of the ordinary run, and that Pilate would do well to get his eyes open? Was it born of Christ's innocence? May it be the unburdening of his indignation? Was it a stroke of Socratic genius, transforming instantly the trial into a conference? Or was it a simple call for light?

Keep studying this question, keeping in mind the Roman hall, the Roman magistrate, the manacles, and the Master. Was the question a masterly turn? Did it give a new complexion to affairs? As the Jews explained the case, in what attitude was Christ *set?* As Pilate understood the matter, in what estimate was Christ *held?* As Christ answered, what attitude did he *take?* Suppose he had made straight answer to Pilate's question, what would have been the difference? Think here. Christ faces Pilate. In fact, he stands there in the poise of perfect innocence, in the beauty of perfect holiness, in the guise of an infinitely patient lowliness, in the consciousness of supreme nobility. Out of such a faultless, well-poised manhood came that counter inquiry, calling upon the governor, before the criminal, to explain. Think. Would the Master's inner worth, his perfect innocence of all arrogance and hate and guile, shining through his outer seemliness, gain any sort of utterance, and get in any sort of testimony before the mind of a man like Pilate? It would be futile before the mob outside. They are hot with deadly prejudice. But think of Pilate. He and Jesus are alone. Would the pure and quiet glow of Jesus' steady eye reach the eye of Pilate, as he bade the governor ponder his own question and disclose its source? Do you see? The Master is teaching still, though at every disadvantage. Watch him work. It is a scene quite worth your study. Fine business is afoot. Jesus is verging near a grand confession. In a few moments it will leave his lips. Watch his dextrous preparation of the way.

(c) Pilate's reply. It is a trifle curt. But it avails for Christ. It answers. His question hails from the Jews.

(d) Christ's first confession (v. 36). Here is a place to square yourself for work. His words are few; but how their volumes roll! "My kingdom;" "this world;" "my servants;" "no fighting;" "not hence." What themes! Have you any notion you can survey their sweep? Deeps open instantly. Christ's kingdom is not like Rome's. Here resounds one of the main burdens of all Christ's words. Read the Beatitudes. Recall his Temptation. Here is the upheaving of a mighty sea. And it meets a mighty counter tide. Pilate stands for force, high dominion, cruel war. Jesus stands for truth and gentleness and peace. There they stand. Let your imagination play. It is a stupendous scene. Jesus is teaching. And he is handling majestic themes. He is matching, there in manacles, the force of a holy life against the onset of a Roman sword. He seems a weakling. He stands in bonds. But he is a king. And he knows his lineage. It is sublime. And it is teaching, teaching of matchless depth and daring and true dignity.

(e) Now Pilate drives his original question home. Watch it get its shape. Jesus has said strange words. But they concerned his realm. This implies that he deems himself a king. This implication must come clear. "Are you then a king?" This is like a Roman sword, short and to the point.

(f) Jesus' answer is equally strong and plain. "The word you utter I adopt. I am a king. This is the point and purpose of my life. This is my sole mission." So the Lord responds. He not merely and barely answers, "yes." He fairly enthrones his claim. Royalty ordered his birth, shaped his plans, girded all his life's endeavors. First and last, through and through he is a king.

Here is a scene for your keenest eye. Try to define Christ's *posture*. Surely he is no coward. And he is no dullard. And he is in his official pretense no niggard. And he is no sluggard. He stands within two hours of the cross. But while the day lasts he works. Work away at this. Describe the Lord, as he holds the

Roman governor at halt, while he expounds his plans and claims.

(g) See his second confession grow complete. He defines the nature of his reign. He is witness to the Truth. Here is the vital heart of all this scene. In the Lord's brief day this hour is deepening eventide. But the light of this confession is, for all the eyes of all who ever essay to teach, the glory of full noon. To the very death the Master stands for the very Truth.

3. Christ's **teaching qualities.**

(a) His *patience.* Review Christ's public life. How is it all coming out? Nazareth chased him for his life. Capernaum was as brass. The five thousand all misunderstood. The sadducees were intractable. The pharisees were bitter and proud. The Sanhedrin vote him a blasphemer and stand just outside, fretting for his blood. All that is left is Pilate and the cross. Who but Christ would have kept back the wail of bitter despair. But measure his patience. It is absolutely infinite. What a hint for teachers!

(b) His *energy.* Review his life's full stretch. How tense its strain has been! But his loins are girt to the very last, and he is as a strong man ready for a race. This last announcement has all the vigor of youth. Do you see the secret of this unwasting virility? He was a devotee to Truth. And his zeal was pure. Imagine it giving way. It is impossible, absolutely. This is big with meaning for teachers.

(c) His *gentleness.* Review his surroundings again. He is in a Roman hall, beleaguered with the implements and arrogance and soldiery of world-conquering Rome. And he stood there as no underling. But study him. How gentle he is! In exactest literalness, he is the Prince of Peace.

(d) His *purity.* That word Truth. In all this stately conference that element is the center and sum. For light and force it is like the sun. He is King of Truth. This is his last confession. Next comes the cross. What a word for teachers!

LESSON XXXII.

Risen, But Teaching Still.

Luke 24 : 13-32.

1. Introductory. One feature here is easily supreme. Jesus is *raised*. He is ranging in a realm of unexampled triumph. All his foes are beneath. All his struggles are behind. He is demonstrated Prince of Life. Read over and over all these recitals, until you have real share in their transcendent quiet and peace, the risen, self-revealing Christ being the center of your thought.

(a) Contrast the situation of Christ and the state of his disciples. While he was all light, transfigured, they were *in the dark,* all bewildered. Let both these realities have place. Open your mind. Fall in with those two disciples sympathetically. Bring right along your own forebodings and dark wonderings about the grave. Sense their state—the cloud, the wrench, the grief.

(b) Now imagine. See Christ making up to them. He is moving in light and peace. They are groping in darkness and distress. See how he *joins* them. How true to life! How like the Lord! He is the soul of gracious courtesy. He glides alongside those heavy, jaded lives just as freely and easily and naturally now as ever he did before his death.

(c) Now study this marvel of dissonance and unison. The transcendent Christ treads upon the earth with all the lowliness requisite to keep perfect step with grief-stricken, wayfaring men. His majesty is confessedly unsearchable. But his partnership with narrow and humble lives is free and genuine as the wooing of a mother's love. Conceive the very attitude and air, the very look and voice of Christ as he stepped forward into friendly conference with those drooping lives. Here is something going on, worth all your eyes. How does

peace lay its hand on anguish? How does strength make touch with weakness? How does light shine in on darkness? Look here and see.

2. Christ makes the initial step himself. They were not disposed to draw up to him. He drew up to them. They were all engrossed in grief. He broke his way. But see just how.

(**a**) He feels after the train of their conversation. "What words are these which you are exchanging with each other, as you walk?" What a lesson for teachers! Go where men walk. Find what men feel. Hear what men say.

(**b**) But note. Jesus' query was not a curious peering. In reality it is an invitation. He is asking them to open out to him their evident grief, and this solely with an eye to steady and console. Read vv. 17-24. See how gently and adroitly he *wins* his way.

(**c**) But see again. This ingenious way of his is not mere dexterity. A goodly tide of brotherly sympathy is flowing here. It is a warm and appealing friendliness that is finding out a way for the Master's further ministry. Study with your nicest thought this wise invasion of Jesus' kindliness into those sorrow-darkened lives. Here is a fine display of finest art—the art of *sympathy*. Look into it. See how love and true discreetness walk together. Real compassion is ingenious. Skill and tender friendliness go arm in arm. Here is heaven's own light for teachers.

3. The Lord's *cheer*. And now their tale is told. Their sorrow has broken through speech a highway to the heart of Christ. He has their secret. They have his ear. Now they walk in unison. And yet how far asunder they are! As they complete their recital, they stand unrelieved. They see no thoroughfare. All seems blank and dark. But the Master is all light. But he has won their heed. Their souls are unto him, though their eyes are blurred. Thus they fare along. Now watch your Lord.

(**a**) He turns about to ancient Hebrew Scripture. He selects the Messianic parts. He lifts aloft two themes: the Messianic Sufferings, the Messianic Joys. And then

he chides in his companions two faults: their want of thought, and their want of faith.

(b) Now gird up your loins. Can you walk with Christ within these deeps, along these heights? Thither he led those sufferers for their relief. Do not refuse to follow. But you will need all your strength. The Messianic Sorrows! The Messianic Majesties! Between these two far-sweeping themes, in the presence of those two plodding, common men, vibrate the Master's words. Think of the Messianic sacrifice. Why "must" he suffer so? Why must he *suffer* at all? No profounder question will ever face your mind, and none more fairly demanding an honorable reply. It cannot be trifled with. This must be understood, if you aspire to teach. Do not snap at answers here. You touch good teaching at its very nerve.

4. Now see where they stand. They have plodded forward till their home is reached. They stand before the door. Instinctively the two turn in. Just as properly Jesus holds straight on.

(a) Here is a point to pay good heed. As this conversation opened, Jesus fell in uninvited. They had no inclination towards his fellowship. But see now. As he essays to draw apart, they step across his path and constrain him to be their guest. Here is something fine. He showed himself their friend. They instinctively befriend him. Now their kindliness is *mutual.* This is a teacher's most precious reward. Study with all your soul to see how it was won.

(b) But the scene is not yet complete. Enter with the Lord and see him join their feast. Do not forget. He is the risen Christ. He is past all weariness or need of meat. But see him recline with these way-worn men. Can you define his mood and attitude? He does not eat. But he truly *joins* their meal. He takes his place. He took the portion of bread; he blessed it before their eyes; he parted it between the two. And then their eyes began to see. And then he became invisible.

(c) Now study. For a teacher's eye few earthly scenes will ever transcend this. Look upon this humble journey and simple meal. Here that long drawn con-

ference culminated. This fellowship at the feast was the final touch. As he took their food and spoke the word of blessing, the vision broke upon them, their eyes awoke, their burning hearts grew clear, their trouble calmed, they believed the prophets, they understood why Jesus died, they knew him risen and that his glory had begun. But look again. See *how* this change was wrought. Are you at all sure you understand? Review it all. Here is just about all you ever need to know of teaching art. Jesus the crucified, the glorified, the compassionate; the two disciples, downcast, footsore, ahungered; the majestic programme of Hebrew hope, the sublime fulfillment in the Nazarene, the humble highway conference; the lowly, friendly meal; the burning, the vision, the vanishing. Con it all. Make your soul familiar with your Master's Scriptures, his sorrows, his glory, his eagerness after men, his neighborly wayside ways, his greetings, his blessings, his guestly grace, his perfect brotherliness. He was ideally a *friend*. He knew how to teach.

5. Teaching hints.

(a) Breadth. Will you note the sweep of your Master's thought? Here were two humble men. He woke familiar strains. But to give them joy he traversed immeasurable realms. Get compass.

(b) Experience. Every word of Christ was warm from his own life. This life was inextricably woven into theirs. That interwoven life, for a little sundered and eclipsed, he now displays in unity and light.

(c) Friendliness. Study the easy entrance of this supernal life into humble paths. What is the nature of a richly furnished teacher's approach to a meager pupil's life? Is it condescension? What is condescension? What is friendliness?

Summary Studies

CHRIST'S GENERAL TEACHING TRAITS

Each lesson that follows here being singly built on all that have gone before

LESSON XXXIII.

He Was Full of Truth.

This is an elemental trait. It lay among the foundations of Christ's being. Feel after his deepest inner consciousness. Truth was a trunk nerve. His assurance was rock-fast. See if you can detect him betraying anxiety or timidity or uncertainty anywhere. See if he ever seems to be feeling his way, as though in the dark; recalling some words, as though to apologize; revising a verdict, as though he had misjudged; knitting his brow, as though nonplused. No. Timidity, misgiving, remorse were sentiments he never felt. He never retraced his steps, nor recalled his words. He spoke what he knew. And his confidence was not faint or dim. It always stood at full meridian. All his thoughts shone clear; all his words had weight. It is amazing to see how many of his utterances are axioms.

1. But what needs primary heed is, that not merely in his opinion nor in his testimony, but in his *very being* Truth stood identified. He and Truth were one. This is truly a stupendous claim. But nothing less is fair. Test it where you wish. Reproduce any scene you like; and see what happens, when the Master speaks. Facing whatever company, treating whatever inquiry, Christ's part in the scene is not merely his word, not merely his deed; it is always primarily himself. In every speech, however brief; in every deed, however fleet, his person flashes out full-orbed. In every gesture his whole momentum is engrossed. He is the Truth. Study this. Every lesson is an illustration.

2. This means that Jesus had an infinitely vigorous *self-respect*. He bore sharp contradictions—all that evil genius could invent—and with a meekness that has never been matched. He suffered every reproach, not declining the cross. But hear his verdict. Those con-

tradictions were the head and front of human sin. In scorning Christ wrong-doing reached its apex. But the dreadful summit of that sin owes all its awful eminence to the heavenly heights in Christ which it assailed. The Saviour meekly bore the storm. But he did not bow his head nor leave his base. He stood in all his majesty, well knowing that his high integrity had not been touched. He and Truth stood fast. Truth and he were one. The same high consciousness of self shows grandly in all his conversations with his friends. Study the proportions of any scene where followers are hanging on Christ's lips, or clustering about his acts. See how he towers. He overtops all throngs like Lebanon. In all his gentle friendliness, he is like the everlasting hills, benignant, but supreme. It is always so. And it is so by the Lord's design. He knows his majesty. It is of his very substance. He is the Lord. In him men live. He is their vine. He is the bread. He is the Truth. He is his own best gift. He guides and lures men to himself. So supreme, so central, so inwrought, so inlaid with very Truth is the Master Teacher's self-respect.

3. This means that he was always *real*. He was deeply genuine. He never passed out counterfeits. He never made pretense. You deem this commonplace. But are you sure you see its reach? See if you can point out scenes where such suggestions might occur. Study the second and third temptations. Feel for the deeper tides in that talk with Pilate. Think what habit, custom, tradition had fastened to such an act as washing hands. Follow this tendency out. It has cut deep fissures in human life. Jesus often faced it. It often proffered gain. See if you detect his swerving by the breadth of one hair. Then view it from the other side. See if Jesus always fully meant all he so plainly said, or really intended all he seemingly did. Take the theme and act of prayer. Take his approaches towards the poor. Take his words on birds, or on the Holy Spirit, or on humility. Follow this up. See whether you are really ready to abide by all it means to say that Christ was always genuine.

4. Now explore his *equities*. In all his teachings see

how values balance. Dealings must be fair. He is always setting deeds and issues in mutual respect. Review his portraits of a steward. Hear his oft repeated laws of true discipleship. Mark his accent on repentance. Hear his warnings to Capernaum, and his woe upon Jerusalem. Study again that prodigal's home. Note how sadly its equilibrium was disturbed. Then see if you can show exactly how that equilibrium was restored. Grand equities are embodied there. Then look into the equity of the Lord's awards, *e. g.,* for such as suffer wrong. Essential truth is hidden here. But it nestles in the heart of grace; and the Saviour's cross is its only key. But everywhere the Lord arouses conscience, and bids each hearer to be fair. He builds on equity; and never more truly than when he hangs upon the cross. There infinite cost stands facing infinite wrong. That anguish was no pretense. It embodied genuine truth. In those deep sorrows, as in the pangs of true repentance, full equity stands unveiled. There, as always elsewhere, Christ and Truth are one.

5. And sometime take the sum of Christ's convictions. Get the *content* of his mind. What did he believe? Find the measure of his full faith about us men. Be minute, and be exact, and keep on to its very end. What does Jesus think of men? Then seize other themes.

6. Now study the Master's fine regard for Truth, as he scored *falsity* in men. How he despises arrogance! How he spurns formality! How he hates a hypocrite! Do you catch the irony in his request for the common boon of heaven—a cup of water—from the race-proud Samaritan? Do you see how his elemental truth works to the same undoing of sham valuations, as he dines with outcast men? He has but to sit and eat, and the gaudy fabric of class pride must sink in full collapse. It is high drama to walk in the honest Master's wake, and see the social bubbles burst.

7. Test it in particular in his call for *penitence.* Impenitence is defiance of plain truth. It hides. It makes out. It lies. Repentance is of the truth. Through and through it is genuine. It is confession.

Deep in its very heart it is real and frank and true. A repentant soul hates darkness. An unrepentant man hates light. He seeks the path of deceit and all hypocrisy. Here are deep things. And Jesus touched the rock in his thoughts about repentance. Tune your ear to his words. They are like a cathedral bell. Their tones roll everywhere. And their central melody is the music of pure Truth.

8. Then watch your Master's posture before an *ambuscade*. Men plotted to entrap his steps, as though he was forever eluding light. See him uncover each decoy. He always walked in light. His transit was like the passing of the sun. He could not be entrapped. And, what was more, he could not be escaped. The plotters were always ensnared. He opened every trick. His simplicity was wiser than any device. And all his secret lay, not in deeper and more intricate counterplots, but in unmixed verity.

Such is one pure trait of Christ. He was engrossed in verity. He plead for deep reality in men. He had no place for vanity. He always made deceivers ill at ease. He made truth-lovers glad. He felt no wish, he had no use for subterfuge. His path was always straight and plain. His tones were full and clear and firm. His girdle was bright immortal Truth. Hence all his fire and skill. Hence all his peace and strength. He cherished Truth with all his heart. He guarded Truth at every gate. He was Truth's bravest champion.

LESSON XXXIV.

He Was Full of Grace.

The face of Christ must have been beautifully benign. The movements of his good-will must have hung in perfect poise and swung in freest ease. For he embodied and unburdened all the love of God; and he had compassion on all the ills of men. Scan each Gospel page. Find how frequent is that word "all." He healed "all" that were sick. He went through "all" their towns. Come, "all" who labor. Christ was no provincial nor recluse. He went "everywhere." And his impulse was pure love.

1. Study this in detail. Think of those 5000 whom he fed. Imagine Jesus singling out and sending off a single one! His bounty came to each. See him spy Zaccheus. He had a vigilant eye. Observe him leave the surging feast and make his lonely way to that friendless invalid at Bethesda. Watch his heavenly kindness run those errands on that resurrection day. No mortal stood so lone nor so remote, that Christ's attentions had to fail. He tended "every" branch. Follow this with all your eyes. See how Jesus *singles out* his ministries. And notice this. As the Master turns from multitudes to one, does his benevolence correspondingly contract?

2. Then study love's *diversity*. See Christ heal that blindness in the ninth of John, and feed that hunger in the sixth. Then note his teachings, as they ensue in either case. And now consider. Is the Master's kind solicitude throughout these scenes identically the same? One hour he grants men physical sight and bodily food—both favors wrought in perishing flesh. Anon he opens to the inner eye and the undying life a vision of the Son of Man and of the bread of life. See now if you can fathom the mighty deepenings of his concern, as

he turns his kindly ministrations from the dying body to the deathless soul. Both are love. But they diverge. Can you see the difference? And can you trace it in your treatment of your class. Now watch his mercy towards the young ruler and Zaccheus. Get your mind attent. Both these men are rich. Both have rank. Both show respect. Both seek his face. Both gain his love. But mark the difference. The youth resents, the publican adopts Christ's gentle intimations of self-denying good-will. Now be distinct. Ponder separately the Master's love for each. Wherein do his kindly sentiments towards each exactly agree and coincide? And wherein do they become *unlike?* Can you make this plain in words? Can you illustrate it in your handling of your class? Do you have like variety? Now compare the love that made him weep before Jerusalem with the love that took expression in the parable of the vine. One is the agony of a heart's farewell before beloved who fling contempt and unrelenting scorn. The other is a joyful outflow of affection in a tender parting conference with eternal friends. In both these scenes the voice is tremulous with love. And the voice is one. But here is *twofold* love as surely as there is a double range in Lebanon. So study love's variety. Make familiar to your eye the love that provides an evening meal, and the love that cherishes an immortal life; the love that opens a sightless eye, and the love that broods over an unfolding mind; the love that strives in vain to dislodge selfishness; and the love that feels full sympathy gain place; the love that gladly shares the wholesome pains of penitence, and the love that meekly bears with obdurate hate; the love that is pure solicitude, and the love that has perfect peace; the love that breaks down in wails, and the love that rises up in song. Search out illustrations.

3. Examine the *occasions* that drew out the Saviour's love. See men's hunger, pain, and solitude; their peril, fear, and crudity; their cravings, and capacity, and neglect; their wonder, darkness, and bewilderment; their promise, and their hopelessness. Scan every one. Find out *what* moved and drew the Lord.

4. Mark *whom* he loved. His mother, and the Magdalen; his disciples, and Samaritans; proud pharisees, and hard publicans; the leprous, the friendless, the bereft; the infant, the decrepit, the despised; the untutored, the unclad, the unfed; the heavy-laden, the demoniac, the lost. Pursue the search. Enumerate every one. It is a famous throng, multitudinous, motley, curious. But for once they were genuinely beloved.

5. Inspect his love's inventiveness. Find the marks of downright *ingenuity* in that parable to Simon in Luke 7; in that many-sided argument against greed in Luke 12; in his answer to Peter in Matt. 18; in his words to that lawyer in Luke 10; in his discussion of the cost of glory in John 12; and in his parable of the vine. Every device is in the interest of love. For the progress of free grace, Christ's thought would instantly find or hew new paths, if none appeared. His ministry of good-will was no slave of custom and fixed ways and forms. His kindliness was always *free*. Here are rich rewards for teachers, as surely as they search.

6. See how his love endured. "How often" did he try to call Jerusalem under his wing? How many were "most" of his mighty works in Bethsaida? How often did unkind retorts draw forth new evidence of his kindliness? How much did Peter cost him? Did you ever try to fathom his forbearance, when they "bound" him? How far had love been strained, when he washed the disciples' feet? Then, when they scourged him, do you think there was then in the patient Saviour's love any of the breath of life? Suppose you try to get his love's full strength. See if you can find where its tension broke away, all his patience being gone. And then, that public pageant of the cross! Did you every try to compute its draft upon your Saviour's love? Follow up this work. Study the Saviour's love. See if you can find anywhere its *bound*. Surely this deserves respect. You hesitate to begin. But do you care to decline? It is the very heart of Christ. Look. What is his love's full strength?

7. See the full measure of its condescension. Of all his loving deeds, which would you esteem the most

minute? How far *down* would Jesus stoop? Was any act too humble? Did he scorn the small details? What was his posture, characteristically? Here is God's pure light for teachers.

8. Compute the precious content of his love. The framework of his ministry was an alabaster box. What costly ointment did it *contain?* Never anything less than his own full self. Test this anywhere. Go through that talk with the woman of Samaria. Discern just how it ends. Look into that covenant between Peter and Christ, as they leave that boat. Find the climax of that conference at Emmaus. Fathom the passion of that woman at the Master's feet; just what was her reward? Try it with Zaccheus: what was his permanent gain? Nothing less than Christ. But approach the question from the other side. As Jesus offered men everywhere his love, what did he mean to give? Always himself. It was so at Bethesda and in Bethany, in the mount and on the sea; in every synagogue and at every feast; when commissioning and when correcting the Twelve. And its earthly climax was on the cross. There he literally offered up himself. Past all denial, here are topics worth our thought. Heaven help all would-be teachers to come to fully see how the Master Teacher loved.

LESSON XXXV.

He Was Wholly Pure.

1. Note Christ's estimates and ways with things that *perish.* Name any perishable possession you can find he ever owned. When he was crucified he had one seamless robe. What more? Hear again that word to the rich youth: "Sell all." Suppose the youth had obeyed. How full a duplicate of such self-denial would he have found in Christ? Call up again those frequent words to his disciples about hating possessions and friends. How far did those teachings find echoes in his own life? Listen again to that "Be not anxious for the morrow." Do you catch there deep undertones of Christ's own heart? Recall that prayer, "Give us day by day our daily bread." How literally, do you take it, the Master lived by that petition? Remember his direction to the Twelve to take no purse. How closely, would you say, did his own practice illustrate that rule? Think of what he said about birds and foxes. Do you suspect he ever found extremities where he found comfort for himself in God's care of birds? Do you suppose his forty days of fasting, and the ensuing Satanic solicitation had any life-long meaning for Christ? After all, what was the meaning of his emphasis upon his ministry to the "poor"? Was he merely comforting misery? Surely his intent looked deeper than that. Read again that parable of the farmer-fool. Are you sure you see its very point? Fix your thought for once on that "not rich toward God." With what does that contrast? That farmer's life was sordid. It should have been refined. But how? Make some definitions here. What in verity do all these words *mean?* See if you can imagine Christ hoarding anything perishable. While he lived he had not where to lay his head. And when he died, his very tomb was a loan. He did live in the flesh. He did have daily need

of food and raiment and rest. He recognized all these as proper to man. But study once more his message to that rich youth. Weigh out again your carefullest that awful word about the fatal peril of wealth and the camel in the needle's eye. Work this out. What is the deliberate attitude of the Master's life, his own every-day life, to this deep problem of material wealth? Surely for himself he held his being pure. He did not find his joy in pamperings of the flesh. He was spiritually refined. He was always rich towards God.

2. Think into the same inquiry, as it opens in the *religious* realm. Get Christ's opinion of a formalist, the man whose religion is a thing of time and place and rite and phrase. Think carefully here. What did Christ condemn? He had much to say of hypocrites. Recall how much of his contentions with men lay within the religious field. Just what was the chronic trouble here? Study into that last great feast, the time when he was crucified. That festival was first and last religious. This was why those Jews held back from Pilate's hall. It was a pagan court. Its precincts could defile. They must keep their religious sanctity intact. They were holy worshipers of the one true God. But Christ was thrust within. And he witnessed there a good confession. Now define the *difference*. And keep Christ's point of view. Get in earnest here. No finer study will ever seek your thought. Think it out. Christ's religious life was absolutely pure. Ponder long those words at Jacob's well, on worshiping the Spirit God in spirit and in truth. Here are thoughts well worth your while to think. There is nothing like them to make the life of teachers deep and high and pure. They will cease to deal with idols.

3. Test the same in *ethics*. The Jews were rigid moralists. They had long codes of rules the most minute. They took keen pride in their correct behavior. Listen to Simon's inner self-applause in Luke 7. See the self-complacency in Mark 7. Think of all the pharisees and all the Master's critics. Recall in particular their scrupulous observance of their Sabbath day. Call up the ruler and the Lord once more. Both stood for

moral life. In many ways the two stood outwardly alike. But in verity their moral ways lay far apart. Now get clear about their difference. Was the youth immoral? Wherein? Was his morality unreal? Just how? Then Christ's morality—by what adjective is its very substance best defined? It was wholly, deeply, truly *pure*. It was not a code of *form*.

4. Thus Christ retained full sanctity. He kept himself pure. His life was spiritual. He held his heart unbound. His inner life was kept forever free. All carnal things were kept subordinate. They had their service for a day. They were apt to perish, or be stolen or get lost. Such transient values could never content an unperishing soul. His cravings were for the bread of life, for beauty passing Solomon's, for rest in heavenly mansions, for treasures that would never rust, and for eternal friendships. His morals were far more than manners. They were vital qualities, spiritual and unseen. And his worship far transcended temple, ritual, feast, and phrase. For him his God was Spirit; and his respect was spiritual and pure. Such was Christ. He was spiritual primarily. That in him which was full-grown, full-formed, full-trained and fully free was his living soul.

5. This meant thoroughness. The Saviour was not half and half. His spiritual health was *full*. His sky was always clear. No cloud of sordidness ever lay across its face. At earliest sight of things that coarsen or sully or defile, that pamper the lust or handicap the will, his strong, free arms swept them entirely and instantly clean out of the temple of his life. And his purity was equally entire in handling other lives. He probed to the very core. No hiding place was left anywhere for any lust. Devotion could not be mixed. Purgations must be complete.

6. This opens to Christ's profundity. Others might offer incense before outer symmetries of personal life. He pressed into its inmost shrine. Publican and prodigal and harlot and alien gained his praise, if only, with mourning for their defilements, their inner longings were pure. While others were training the physical frame to

facile, graceful ways, his thought was deftly feeling towards the heart and contriving how to give holy freedom to the will. Reach for his very life's philosophy in his words about the bridegroom and the washings in the second and the seventh of Mark. He sought to get life's *fountains* pure and free.

7. Here lies the secret of the Master's unmatched hospitality. His *friendships* were unbound. He declined all restraints of race and rank, because the clew to all true kinship nestles in the inner life. Gross outer habitudes and forms are not the seat or sum of personal worth. He put them all aside. He paid instead his deference to honor; he had respect for rectitude; he felt true pity for true-felt penitence; he found delight in faithfulness; he made glad covenants with purity; he rested in real friendliness; he honored every reverent soul; he deeply loved the lowly—indifferent all the while to tribe or grade. His fellowships were purely spiritual.

8. So the Master lived and worked. He paid due heed to the normal needs and cravings of the human flesh, and to the proper helpfulness of outer forms. He healed and fed the human frame. He cleared and reverenced the sanctuary. But he taught that the temple, with all its beautiful stones, should be made desolate; and that man should prize his life more than limbs or hands or eyes. Test this anywhere. Catch his accent on the spirit life with Nicodemus, the Samaritan, in Nazareth, with Simon the pharisee, in John 6, in Mark 7, with the rich fool, with the rich youth. Study each and all until you find the very essence of the high refinement of your Lord. See how his heaven-born soul made all its way amid the soilures of our earthly life unsmirched. Stand by him at the High Priest's bar, and in that Roman hall. On every side is base alloy. But Jesus Christ stands incorrupt. He is absolutely pure.

LESSON XXXVI.

He Had Authority.

Though Christ was always lowly, and never arrogant, his ministry was always vested with a kingly majesty. The grasp he laid on human life was imperial, and it has never yet relaxed. He was patient as a mother; but he was regal, too. He often suffered pain and stood beneath reproach; but he was never faint nor wilted down in shame. He often fashioned questions and sought replies, he often referred his case to the judgment of other men; but it never betokened that his own mind hung in any suspense, or wavered in any doubt. He frequently made appeals, and they were frequently repulsed; but the force and beauty of those appeals were never once impaired, not the merest whit. He often forged strong arguments, only to find their reasoning disdained; but every chain and every link of his connected thought hold fast to-day with cogent, unspent force. All he ever said, all he ever did, all he ever was had overwhelming strength. However men might interlock and struggle to counteract his work, the onset of his life was every time preponderant. He was gentle, to the point of sacrifice; but he was prevalent, to the point of victory. His deference for all men stands exemplary for all time; but his dominion over all was invariably complete. Here is something worthy any teacher's reverence. The Master Teacher is true Lord.

1. One aspect is his *assurance.* He never seems tentative, as though unclear. He never appears solicitous, as though unsure. Test this. Take the outside circuit of his official plan. It compassed all the world. It was to wear through mighty centuries. It was to face deep-set antagonisms. Now, as he makes up to this stupendous task, closely watch his mien. It gives at times plain signs of awful agony, but only to be

matched by an awful energy, and to be ruled by full self-mastery. Such a countenance could be upborne by nothing less than an eternal confidence. Study this in that tragedy by Pilate. Then study it at Nazareth, and at Capernaum. He knew. He knew his task. He knew his strength. He knew the last alternatives. With perfect self-control he took and held his ground. Certainty in him was elemental. His daring could be supremely fine; and it could be supremely calm.

2. Another aspect is his *lordliness*. He knew himself, and felt himself, and called himself a King. Follow in his wake, and ask men anywhere. Ask the impotent man. Ask Zaccheus. Ask the Samaritan woman. Ask the sadducees. Ask Judas. Ask Peter. Ask those sojourners at Emmaus. Ask demoniacs. Ask the resurrected dead. Then study his averments about true prayer, true brotherliness at feasts, self-righteousness, the lure of wealth, true stewardship. Test him every way. Try denying the validity of any word, or the propriety of any deed. Fancy reversing his decree at some superior court. Try this in John 5. Try it on his final word about Capernaum, remembering it was keyed to their impenitence. Test it on his tribute to a little child. See if you can designate one place where Christ's lordship has been or ever shall be overtopped. Pursue the task. Make full testing of his majesty. Is he really incomparable and supreme?

3. Another aspect is *finality*. This may seem a repetition. But study it by itself. Take any scene. See when and where and how the Master brings transactions to an end. Where do Gospel conversations stop. Take your thought right there, and look around. Examine how they terminate. Do discussions really *end?* Do they reach a terminus? Study this. Where does Jesus usually land a pupil? Think about this. How often does he lead to a vantage of free vision? How often does the conference culminate in an exercise of trust? Which is better as a finality? Teachers have need of clearness here. Has Christ real authority, after all? Can he fix finalities? Is he Lord? Study especially the Master in dissension or debate, and see how unanswer-

able he is. Test this in all those Sabbath scenes. Can you show exactly *how* he shuts off further words?

Study him when he sits as judge. At every turn he is passing estimates on men. Collect those verdicts, and compute their gravity. They are all eternal. They balance endless destinies. But he never seems as though venturing with a guess, or trifling with the truth. He plainly feels and knows the dreadful purport of his words. His solemnity is supreme. His behavior becomes a judge. Make proof of this in that teaching over a little child. All his ways in that bright scene are gentle. But in those brief phrases roll the undertones of eternity. See this in his parables. Well nigh all of them are vestured with supreme judicial majesty. And remember. They are all spontaneous. In them the inmost impulse of his heart springs uncontrolled and free. Their tone betrays the temper of his soul. They show his very instincts. And their judicial renderings bear every semblance of being deemed beyond repeal. Read again that story of the spurned feast, or that about laborers in the vineyard. Do you conceive that those interpretations of the kingdom's law are likely to be revised? Impressive signs of the same judicial lordliness come clear in the tendency of men to resort to him for opinions on their controversies. Glean such instances together, and study what they mean. Each case disclosed the movement of an instinct. Do you believe this true? And do you see its bearing on the radiance and ascendency of Christ's judicial thought?

4. Make special study of that scene with Pilate. Walk all about the Master's lordliness, as presented there. He avows that he is King. Examine his throne. Describe and define his realm. Name his insignia. Set forth his ways and means. Who own his sway? And why do they submit? Every answer poises on one single word. Truth upholds his throne, outlines his realm, gilds all his symbols, provides his sinews, fills and orders all his train. Truth is his girdle and sword. Truth is his beauty and pride. Truth is his glory and strength. Truth is his footing and crown. Truth binds all his followers, and is the sole armor of his soldiery. Truth

scatters all his enemies and consummates all victories. He is King of Truth. This is his word to Pilate. And it is no idle claim. He is soon to seal it with his blood. Now make some survey of its magnitude and majesty. Try to gird its amplitude. Try to scale its excellence. Try to feel its strength. Are you sure you have proper sense of Truth? Do you see that it is impregnable? Do you see that its beauty is perennial, that its power can never waste, that its body will never die? And do you see how absolute is Christ's affiance? He knows and loves and publishes pure Truth. He never faints nor doubts. He never halts nor fears. He never gives an inch up to retreat. His throne is forever. He is forever on a throne. Linger here. Your Saviour is supreme. And his supremacy is secure.

5. But look again. See devotion mingling with dominion in his life. He who is mighty Lord came to humbly serve. Over all his majesty there is a beautiful grace. He figures as a deputy. His dignity is denied. He always speaks for God. But in all that fine humility, behold the shining of high majesty. He verily speaks for God. See it in the fifth of John.

Thus the Master reigns. He is most gracious King.

LESSON XXXVII.

He Was Thoughtful.

The Master must have been much in meditation. Proof of this lies everywhere. Survey, *e. g.*, the swing and plunge of meaning in his summons to repent. As he struck the outline of that theme, no thinking was ever more profound. That single law, if well obeyed, would set the whole world right. The same sure mental penetration shows full in his indictment of hypocrisy. But strip away pretense, and the utmost range and inmost reach of life runs real; deep plots would face the sun, and erring estimates would become correct. That word about one Spirit God was, in its place, a master thought, well poised, well aimed. It broke through all conceit of time and place and form and many unreal gods in the religious realm forevermore. Study into that word "love" in the parable to Simon, while the woman bathed his feet. Careful thinking chose and placed that little word. See if you can show whereon it rests, to what it leads, just what it is, and what its sure reward. Then try the parable of the prodigal. Fix on that awful self-renunciation: "I am unworthy to be called thy son." There struggles no chance phrase. He who can closely trace the Master's thinking in that short speech has made discovery of every filial bond, of all parental care, of all the claims of equity, and of a moral riddle which only Calvary can solve.

Then see him argue through the grounds and forms and paths of prayer. Those words are born of thought. That thought is ultimate. And that the Saviour knew. Test this in his arguments. Try to part them. See how his life was interlaced with thoughtfulness. There are arguments in his very deeds. A major premise, and a minor, and a grand conclusion were interwoven in his walk, when he bravely turned into Zaccheus' home. Try

this: I honor all true men; Zaccheus' humanity is true; I dine with him. Watch him weld the logic of his life. It is fashioning everywhere. He forged strong thought when fighting Satan, and when offering the highpriestly prayer; when balancing beatitudes, and when delivering woes; when cleansing the temple, and when healing the paralytic. His acts were arguments. Imagine his true lips and life uttering anything inconsequent or absurd. His day, through all its course, was lucid. And its every flash and ray were by design. He was a Teacher in very deed.

He Was Balanced.

See if you can find in Jesus any bias, or onesidedness, or fanaticism of any sort. East and West were equally open to his eye. He saw heaven and hell, earth and sky, peasant and scribe, cradle and grave. He was equally at ease by the marriage altar, and by the bier; among the hills, and on the sea; in the hall of Pilate, and in Emmaus. He stood in full repose, when transfigured, and while being bound. He moved with natural grace, when making the triumphal entry, and when ascending the cross. He had a lion's strength, and the gentleness of a lamb. He could sting or soothe, rebuke or praise, inspire or overwhelm. See him face the luxurious ruler, and the impoverished Peter, each with instant, adequate address. Above all get the even balance of his truth and love, of self-devotion and self-respect, of majesty and humility, of eagerness and peace. Everywhere and evermore his equilibrium is exact. Nothing spoilt his poise.

See if you can see into this. Explore into his rest in God. His life was central. He never roved. He fastened upon the essential point. All his thoughts and words were focal, pivotal. His estimates were keyed to spirit, lowliness, truth, grace. And he had breadth. In handling men he seized on traits, where all have fellowship. He wrought in the reaches of hunger, pain and sin; of conscience; aspiration and fear; of impenitence, unfriendliness and greed. He plowed main currents

every day. And he kept firm hold of either oar. Study this in Luke 12 and Mark 10. Get the evenness of his swing, as he deals with need and trust, with loss and gain. Mark the rhythm of his thought, as he handles honor and humility in the presence of a child. So always. The dispositions of his strength were set in marvellous equivalence. He had fine sense of symmetry.

He Was Simple.

His life and aim were one. He was universal Friend. He came to unify. He often told his errand in a single phrase: He came to save. He held unvaryingly to one goal; he was always making towards the cross. Befittingly, he always probed towards conscience. From whatever point, by whatever path, he was always pushing towards the heart to dislodge sin and build up holiness. He knew but one alternative; and that was doom. But even that lay coiled inextricably in holiness, and conscience, and the cross. See this as consistency, and as persistence. He never swerves, or doubles, or becomes ambiguous. His speech is one. His life is one. He had one prime desire. He handled all mankind alike. Nicodemus, the young ruler and the haughtiest pharisees, were treated just as he treated outcasts and harlots and publicans. For Jews and Gentiles and for all the world he had one cross, one repentance, one forgiveness, one fellowship in joy.

He Was Replete.

He walked in fruitful gardens. All the clusters of his thought were plentiful. Take that conversation with Nicodemus. How it superabounds! Measure the outburst of his thought in John 5. It drew from ample reservoirs. And those reservoirs were fed from the infinite sea. The love of the Father for the Son—what an upspringing stream! See his familiar access to the treasure-house of nature. All his instances and illustrations from teeming earth are only samples of his wealth. Then see how all the value of his own full life

lay always ready to his touch. And how often he swept all its compass in swift review! His progress was no meager rill. His ongoings were the movement of a mighty, far-spreading tide. And it all was fluid to his will. His being was of heroic mould. His ample soul gave ample room for the Holy Spirit's full anointing. He was freighted with the all-embracing love of God. He stood ready daily to bear witness to all Truth. His orb shone always full. This is one of the grandest wonders of his ways. Test this anywhere. Test it everywhere. Quick as you face his eye, you are facing fullness of all light. Wherever he walks, that path becomes a highway. Wherever he stands, that spot becomes a focus. And this not because he says or does or seems so much. It is simply that he is central. Hence he is replete. Approach him on any side, and he is all there. And when he draws near to us, he is always advancing from the throne and standing in its whole effulgence. All his ways and paths are radii. Test this as he journeys towards Emmaus. When that talk began, those pilgrims had no heart, no joy, no hope. But when that conference closed, their heart and joy were full. There was no lack.

LESSON XXXVIII.

He Was Intense.

There was in all the Master's work a fervid glow. He was in earnest. He never lapsed into apathy. His toil wore out his day. Feel again the vigor of his pulse by Pilate. Remember again the constant tension of his life's toil. There had been a ceaseless, superhuman strain. But mark the ardor of his unspent passion in that last and most unlikely hour. His zeal is fervid still. His will is unrelaxed. His interest in his mission beseems his prime. His blood is up. He seems to know he braves all Rome. And with footing like the temple rock, and triumph in his tone, he fronts the Roman arrogance, and lifts aloft again the whole grand programme of his life, while knowing well that before that morning's sun should stand at noon his body would hang dying on a cross. And this was a sample scene. In all he ever said there was all the earnestness of his very life. It was just the same in Nazareth. Right there he set the opening battle of his life with open eye right where he knew the certain cost must be his life. And so it was all through. Every day he gave his life. Do you see this deeper meaning in that step that led to Zaccheus' home? That was a quiet act. But it had within it all the earnestness of the cross. The same intensity struggles in those parables of Luke 15. Get all your senses operant, and touch that chapter anywhere. Its stress is infinite. Test this often in that paragraph that grew together on occasion of those visiting Greeks. There is fine action here. The movement of that speech is like the thrust and pull of a giant piston-rod. The Master's thought is like the pressure of pent steam. You will labor many faithful days before you gauge the energies of that scene. The Lord was tense. Within all his seeming quietness there

swung the strong vibrations of a powerful heart. God's throne was based in righteousness. In all the world raged wickedness. He was God's vicegerent. Within his being throbbed all the strength of the balanced interplay of the moral universe. There was ceaseless, awful strife. He stood in the very brunt. He would never surrender. He would never disguise. He would never make a trade. He was in earnest. Every moment he stood ready to offer up his life. He kept the faith. He loved the Truth. The cross was the efflorescence, as well as the climax of his life. He saw the awful end. But he despised the shame. He welcomed all the cost. He never lost his zest.

He Was Ready.

This stands open beautifully there in Nazareth. But it is striking everywhere. Mark his instant skill with parables. How often they were invented on the spot! Their beauty burst forth in a flash. Test this at Simon's feast, by Peter's query about forgiveness, in the story of the marriage feast, in the picture of the farmer-fool, in the chapter of the prodigal. This is always clear in scenes of conference. Study that argument in John 5. No profounder, grander, plainer course of thought was ever set in human speech. But all its plot and train were laid and opened while he spoke. Study here his comments at his feasts. Test this over that homily on a little child. See the Master select (mark this) and expound that deep-laid theme. It was swift and sure as a flash of light. Test this anywhere. See if you find signs anywhere that he was caught unprepared. Watch his finger, as it finds that word to Moses at the bush, to show the sadducees. How quick and true its indication. But he had no warning. And yet how sure and wise and durable his wit just there! Test this in the portrait of the prodigal. That picture will bear a microscope. It is done with infinite carefulness. And yet it is nothing but a wayside sketch. His mind was always at home, awake, in trim.

He Was Brief.

Read again his chief discourses. The Sermon on the Mount can never be called long-drawn. But its brief stretch is broken many times. And each scant fragment is little but a lively covey of varied, shining apothegms. Take the parables. For literary terseness in the most literal sense they stand unapproached. As mental epitomes they match his miracles. They are truly marvellous. In the blending of conciseness and easy grace their art stands finished. In every one of them refinement has touched the last degree. Study his instructions on the theme of prayer. Name the notable qualities of those words; then note their brevity. Those utterances answer for a full philosophy of prayer. And the pulsing of their phrases is perfectly free and smooth. They lie there in that model and discourse as warm and fair and unrestrained as the life in an infant's arm. But they can all be easily rehearsed, while two swift minutes are running out their round. Study his own highpriestly prayer. That supplication ranges everywhere. Traverse all its sweep. Then calculate its time of utterance, and its space in literature.

Test this through Tuesday of the passion week. No task was left unfinished. But he made short work of everything. Hear him in the final judgment halls. His words there are like rifle shots. Look into this. The chiseled precision, the instant readiness, the unwavering directness of the Master's speech make its compactness a prime phenomenon. Study it. No finer mental exercise for teachers can be found. Learn from Jesus how to keep the easy play of flowing life and yet remain concise.

He Was Intrepid.

Christ feared nothing. And he braved everything. Did you ever try to penetrate all the vista that opened before his light-filled eye when he faced his baptism? In the very midst of that sacrament he stopped to fashion and offer up a prayer. Suppose you try to think what that entreaty *meant*. He must have felt right then

and there all the weight and strain of his intense career. But you can detect no tremor or shudder of cowardly dismay. Think into this. Imagine Jesus shrinking back from that tremendous instant when the Holy Spirit sealed and made irrevocable all the infinite joys and awful sorrows of the Messianic work. He must have foreseen all. But see how steady and clear his purpose stands in that sacramental exercise of prayer. Never did unsullied bravery stand in more exigent demand or clearer display.

The same strong fearlessness stands plain in Nazareth, in the sermon on the mount, in the sending of the Twelve, in all his outright thrusts at petted sin. He was constantly imperilling his peace and good standing with the high fashion of his time. But he felt no awe for sin or sinners, however high.

And he did not lie in idle barracks. He was always out in the open field, and on hostile soil. He dared to burn all bridges, and make the conflict ultimate. Study here his triumphal entry. Viewed one way, that pageant wore an ineffable grace. But examined again, its intrepidity was absolute. Review again his struggle with Satan in the temptation scenes, his message to Herod, his dialogues with pharisees, his final parley with Pilate. Every scene shows not mere defense, but a stout-hearted dash and onset of bravery that made contestants quail. He knew that darkness could not face the light, that intrigue could not undo integrity, that truth could put error to open shame, that right could conquer wrong, that death must yield to life, that Satan would bow to God. And as Champion of truth, and Prince of life and Son of God, with eager, deathless, dauntless heart he chose the center of every battlefield. He was in all the world its truest Hero.

LESSON XXXIX.

He Was Concrete.

Christ was always in the thick of life. He dealt with beating hearts, active wills, current deeds, vital states. He kept to things in easy reach. To show God's care he points to flowers. To show God's grace he heals the blind. To teach humility he points to a blushing child. To show a miser's folly he talks of barns and feasts and laziness. To show fraternity he eats with publicans. To demonstrate immortality he mentions Abraham. To recommend submissiveness he points to himself. To intimate the fitness and potency of prayer he points to a hungry boy. To show how honor may shine in lowly deeds he washes his followers' feet. He always keeps in touch with things in easy sight. And yet he is never shallow. Here is prime counsel for all who teach. Christ could be both vivid and profound—a twinship none too common in the teaching realm. Look into this. It is your life. His dealings with our daily things were never trivial. They always show profound discernment. He understood. He sensed their meaning. He opened up their deeps. He was always connecting them with God. He brought to light their interest. He showed how items in our life cohere. He was a supreme interpreter. He could make familiar things that men thought strange. He could show that distant things stand near; that transcendent things lie within our range; that common things are precious; that humble things can be sublime; that each day's hues are heavenly; that every man is God-like. This is wonderful. Christ's speech was always simple. But it was unfailingly incomparably profound. His ways were often homely. But he never failed to be sublime. His walk was in the very midst of plain men's daily life. But he had eyes to see.

He Was Manifold.

Every finished landscape is finely variegated. So with the teaching art of Christ. He was continually resorting to a new device. See his parables. Now they paint a king, now a sheep, now a vine, now a debtor, now a marriage feast, now an ox, now a band of angels, now a humble herdsman, now a house rock-fast, now a traveler in distress. Again he paints a woman with her broom, a fisher with his net, a bridegroom with his wife, a trader with his team, a farmer with his land, a brother cherishing hate. Hear his appeals. How they vary! Now he stirs the tendency to fear, now to greed, now to father love, now to love of praise, now to fair requital.

He touches the life of man everywhere. He feels the lure of trade, the charm of art, the joy of fellowship, the thirst for gain, the fire of zeal, the bitings of remorse, the ambition to control.

His speech looks every way. Wherever humanity toils or frets, weds or sobs, fails or gains, his eye looks heedfully on, and his thought shapes befitting words. As variegated as is the face of human life, so variegated is the face of the Saviour's teaching art. See how impressively this comes clear in his portrayals of human sin. Spotless as the sky himself, the reflection upon the surface of his speech, of every sin-flecked phase of human life, gives its truest, fullest picture that we have. But in it all was unity. His life was like the sea. It lay unchanged, while conforming to the pressure of every passing breeze.

He Was Poetic.

The Lord's inventiveness was phenomenal. No faculty of his spirit was more nimble than his fancy. All the world of thought, and all the world of fact seemed plastic, almost fluid to his touch. His speech is a panorama of living illustrations. His addresses were dramas in miniature. Study that parable of the prodigal. Its reality is absolute. But it is pure invention. Look into that transaction of the host disturbing his neighbor's rest for a gift of bread for his supperless guest. No

actual incident could be more vivid. Yet it is nothing but a quick device of free, creative thought. To his deep, liquid eye all nature was astir with life, and instinct with suggestiveness—fit raiment for many beautiful thoughts. See him find fair livery for his messages in a spreading vine, a blooming plant, a dying seed, a barren tree, a worthless weed. He found wings and feet for his lessons in the nestling bird, the burrowing fox, the watchful hen, the ravenous wolf, the filthy swine, the helpless ox, the loathsome dog, the witless sheep. His wit found ready helpers in water, bread and salt, in light and wind and rain, in house and door and tomb. To his imagination the leaven in the meal, the ferment in the wine, the shrinkage in the cloth were teeming with instructiveness. See engaging pictures fill his mind, as he passes stewards, physicians, merchantmen; a father, a neighbor, a judge; a shepherd, a fisherman, a king; a debtor, a widow, a guest; a father, a son, a friend; a miserly fool, an unneighborly priest, an unmerciful fellow-servant. But his ornaments were never gauds. Though they made his teaching beautiful, they were never mere embellishments. His fancy never left reality. His very figures body forth the truth. To his deep-seeing eye the whole round world was solid, solemn parable. His fancy was true vision. His vesture was pure light.

His Ways Were Beautiful.

Here is a charming study. Imagine Christ receiving decorations. He never did. He never could bedeck his form. He never set an ornament. His beauty was all inborn. Study this in John 4. That woman doubtless carried meretricious charms. Recall the Biblical description of an adulteress' attire. Now study Christ, as he arrests her eye. He stood in pure and native grace. Try to fancy this. Read again his gracious hint about a heavenly gift; his deft reminder about her personal sin; his wholesome hope for unity between Samaritans and Jews, under one true Spirit God; his open manliness; his posture of quiet, suffering respect before her halting courtesy. Here is beauty such as would make

this seamed earth heavenly fair. Have you eyes to see? Note its pattern there in Peter's boat. As his presence graced and trimmed that little craft, his behavior towards those throngs, and towards Peter's sturdy arms traced out a Spirit's profile, which it would be the crown of highest art ever to reproduce. Follow this everywhere. Christ was ideally urbane. He was thoroughly refined. His manners became the heavenly court. See him lay his palm upon the head of a little child, and lift his prayer, and say "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." Tarry here, until you see in what beauty gentleness and dignity may blend. Jesus was wholly fair. His life was passed without a fleck. The open face of his behavior stands forth unsullied, radiant, benign. He is the world's full norm of inwrought grace.

LESSON XL.

The Whole in Brief.

Now it is time to clear and brace your mind to gather all these lessons into one. Here is an undertaking fit to tax any mortal at his best. You will need your finest insight and your best device. Attempt it every way. Try this. Did you ever come to love an oriental rug? Think how it came to pass. Some person told you it was beautiful. You entered the bazaar. All was strange at first. Each sample seemed a medley of unmeaning forms and hues. At length your eye became engaged. Lovely colors lay in view. Outlines took on order. And at last it stood forth clear that careful thought inwrought the whole; that every thread was closely set to fit a high design; that all those hues were sterling as the very sun; that all those figures joined to form a pathway to the sky; and that the whole fair outline was a reverent symbol of religious faith, an instrument of prayer.

Something such is the Gospel pattern of the teaching art of Christ. At first it may seem destitute of ordered unity. But the various scenes will bear a nice inspection. It soon comes clear that beauty and order are everywhere. Fair outlines gleam from every part. Every figure is athrob with life, and vividly aglow. The whole is fashioned by a fine design. There is a Gospel teaching art; and Jesus holds it in full mastery. And when his work is done, there spreads a pattern of religious fellowship in which in very deed the earth and sky are beautifully made one.

This unique achievement deserves minute examination. Such investigation shows these prime realities. Four qualities are inwrought in the Master's teaching art, like four prime colors in a rug. He weaves in Truth, Love, Purity, and Lordliness. These four are

primal elements, simple, original, unmixed. And these four are all. By skillful, varying use of these, all hues and outlines of his work are mixed and shaped. All other tones and qualities of his life are varied minglings from these four. Majesty, verity, purity, charity, in simple or in some blending guise, fill out his life. They hold the solid substance of all he does.

But they merge and interplay in manifold variety. Hence all the changing phases of the Saviour's skill. The heavenly pattern is transfigured every day. But the facile Saviour stands the same, the soul of honor, the source of mercy, all spiritual, true Lord. Keep your eye on each. And never fail to notice how their beauties blend. Try these following four tests. They are merely sample final studies. They show all the Master's excellence in one glance.

His Vigor.

Christ's bow abode in strength. He always stands erect. He faces every day's endeavor steadily. And when the day is done, his forces are still composed, unstrained, and free. And unlimited reserves seem always at command. Then watch the outflow of his beneficence. By every sign it was exhaustless. Follow his endurance. His patience and persistence never sagged an inch. Where were his zeal, or long-suffering, or respect for righteousness, or trust in God, or abhorrence of all sin ever more robust than through that closing week? Trace this through all his life. His force was irreducible.

But now see what in very fact that energy was. It was nothing but the interleashing of those four elemental traits. His soul had majesty; his life was purely spiritual; he stood champion for truth; he was the living medium of God's love. These were all his sinews. They were the girdle of his loins.

His Grandeur.

Quiet and lowly as the Saviour was, he was never other than sublime. His affinity was with the sky.

He spoke for God. Yet in this same trait he had strange affinity with men. He fully harmonized in earthly scenes. But even so he always stood in stateliness. See how he towered there in Peter's boat, by that impotent man, in the synagogue at Nazareth, when his arms embraced a child. Even when his ways were friendliest, he bore plain marks of awful majesty. Study this strange fusion of winsomeness and far-surpassing excellence, as he instructs his followers how to pray. See it, as he engages in his own great supplication. There his visions and entreaties become august, fit prelude to the awful grandeur of the cross. So always. The Lord had transcendent store of weight and excellence. His nobility was infinite.

What constitutes him so grand? It was the pure-toned utterance of a worthy spirit life, inwrought of heavenly love and equity in the fashion of their own inherent dignity. It was the King of truth and love coming in his spiritual realm. This was all his majesty.

His Symmetry.

Nothing in Christ was overgrown. The features of his work were regular. See if you can find where his blows were laid too hard, or where they fell too faint. See if anywhere you can find his manner was extreme. Note his accents. Study his choice and use and nice adjustment of ways and means. Was his zeal too hot, or his spirit too unconcerned? Watch him set and trim the balance of his life. Did he ever leave it inexact? Just where? Balance the beatitudes. Find the point of equilibrium in the pattern prayer. Watch him poise his thoughts on trust. Then get the swing of the Lord's own character. Follow its outline. Are his shoulders even? Does either footstep halt? Nay, verily.

Now wherein consists his symmetry? Again, it is in the easy interplay of lordliness and love and truth and purity. His sympathy and majesty agree. Faithfulness and tenderness harmonize. And all are fully spiritual. They all subsist in unison.

His Kinship.

Jesus was friend and fellow of every man. He cherished human brotherhood. He walked in step with any traveler; and joined in full companionship in daily feasts. He was filial son of Mary, and trusty comrade of Zaccheus. He was a child of Adam, and of the seed of Abraham, and he deeply loved his kind. And he lived a normal human life. He showed us all how to be true men. He traversed all our varied path. He showed subjects how to serve, and rulers how to rule. He showed neighbors how to be true friends, the suffering how to meekly bear, dependents how to trust, the needy how to pray, and all men how to die. He was the great exemplar. He bore our flesh, he shared our lot, he won our crown. His human fellowship was complete.

But in what did this full partnership consist? Surely not in eating food and needing rest. Rather in the realms of deathless destinies. He revealed to man his higher worth in ways of gentle, faithful comradeship, beyond all reach of change and death, where dignities are won by ministry, and where reverence and lowliness never fail.

Thus the Master Teacher becomes unveiled before us in his work. He is the very soul of moral earnestness. He seals his teaching with his life. His whole heart is in all his work. His own behavior shows us how devotion and sincerity may be supreme and pure. And his teaching ministry makes us see and feel and know that truth and love and immortality, which stand supreme in him, may be freely shared by us. So perfect are his ideal and example and art. In all the teaching realm he is the Teaching Model for all time. Heaven help us, having caught some visions of his teaching skill, to walk in fellowship with his teaching ways.

Sample Questions for Examination

I. BY LESSONS.

Lesson 1.

What sort of a pupil was Nicodemus?
What was his chief excellence?
What was his chief defect?
What was Jesus' central theme?
Why did he choose this theme?
Name all the separate topics Jesus named.
What was Jesus trying to do with Nicodemus?
Do you think he gained his wish?
What was Jesus' estimate of this man?
Name three good teaching traits shown here.

Lesson 2.

Briefly trace through the conversation.
Define in general the nature of the pupil.
Name the features most discouraging to a teacher
Name the features most helpful to a teacher.
Define Christ's aim, as he took each step in turn.
What was his one, main design in it all?
Show the teaching value of Christ's deftness.
Show the teaching value of Christ's personal worth.

Lesson 3.

How far was Christ equipped for teaching before he began?
Define briefly his life's aim.
Why did he allude to that widow and leper?
Why did that allusion make such trouble?
Estimate Christ's teaching zeal here.
Estimate Christ's teaching wisdom here.
Estimate Christ's teaching grace here.
Were all these traits well-balanced here?

Lesson 4.

Name the traits in Christ which Peter would see and feel.
Of these, which ones would Christ design to show?
Name the signs of Christ's power over Peter.
In what forces here did Jesus chiefly put his trust?
What influence had Christ's fellowship in winning Peter?
What function had Jesus' majesty in this scene?
What was Jesus after chiefly, affection or respect?

Lesson 5.

What charge did Jesus have to meet?
What was the attitude of these men?
Show signs that Jesus was driven to self-defense.
Show signs that Jesus was making assault.
Are there any signs that Jesus was trying to win?
Give a terse outline of his argument.
Estimate the strength of his reply.
What use did he make of the Father's love?
What use did he make of his own character?
Just what was Jesus trying to defend?
Just how, in brief, did he do it?
Name here two pre-eminent teaching traits.

Lesson 14.

Define the disciples' point of view.
Define their desire.
Define their fault, as Christ would.
Name the signs of humility.
Name the signs of its absence.
Can greatness and humility thrive together?
Show how a little child can lead such men right.
Is this lesson easy or hard? Why?
Do Christ's words here start or stop thought?
Name signs here of Christ's mastery of teaching art.
Show how teaching may be simple and also profound.

Lesson 15.

Describe Peter's state of mind.
Did he understand his own question?

Did Christ answer Peter's exact question?
Name the central tenet of Christ's teaching here.
Name signs here of Christ's mental agility.
Name signs here of Christ's mental intensity.
Name signs here of Christ's mental depth.
Define the center of Christ's desire for Peter.
Define the change in Peter Christ's words are apt to induce.
Which seems more notable here: Christ's ease or strength in teaching?

Lesson 28.

How far were these sadducees in the dark?
How far were they in doubt?
How far were they sincere?
Show signs that Christ fully understood them.
Show the chief resources of Christ's reply.
Can you gather Christ's theory of handling an obtuse scholar?
Define the value for all teachers, of Christ's main convictions here.
What is the inmost secret here of Christ's skill?

II. IN GENERAL.

Name four weighty, common difficulties Christ had to meet.
Illustrate the bad effects of pride upon a scholar.
Show in different scenes how Jesus handled pride.
What sort of people did Jesus find most teachable?
Give illustrations of each sort.
Show where Christ refused to follow a pupil's lead.
Show cases where Christ volunteered his own theme.
Did Christ teach mostly multitudes or individuals?
Give proofs of courage in Christ's teaching.
Give illustrations of patience in Christ's work.
Name the most striking cases of Christ's readiness.
Name the main signs of Christ's profundity.
Cite four cases where Christ links together an argument.
Define a parable.
What is its teaching value?
In what cases is a parable most wisely used?
Give the signs of Christ's respect for a pupil.
Illustrate Christ's jealous devotion to truth.
Where did Christ ever stand upon his dignity?
Name cases where Christ's teaching gained success.
Name cases where Christ's teaching was refused.
Show what sacrifices Christ's teaching cost him.
Show what rewards Christ's teaching won before the cross.
Work up a new lesson all by yourself.

All the above questions are only samples. They may be modified and continued, according to any one's wish, indefinitely.

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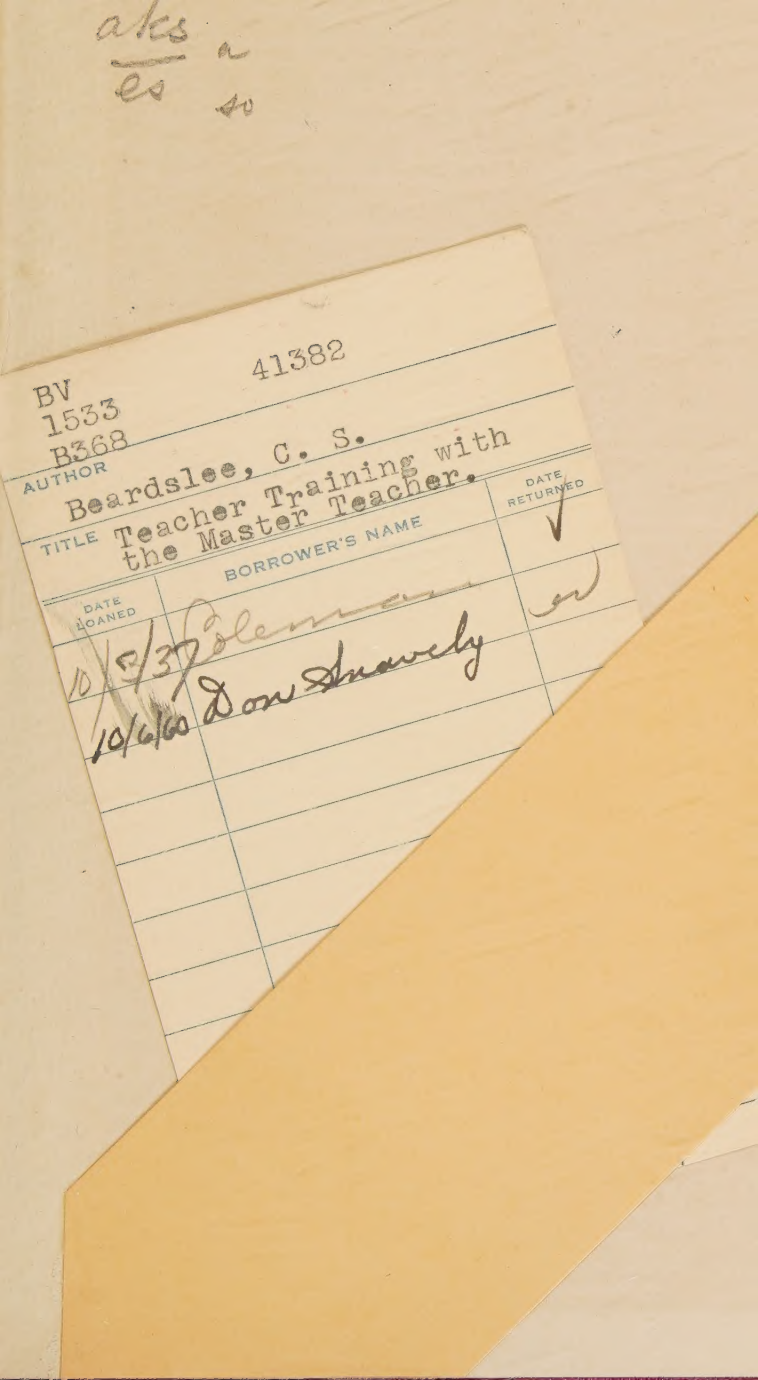
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